Everybody's Magazine

Fiction—

LEAVITT ASHLEY KNIGHT
A New Serial
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FEBRUARY

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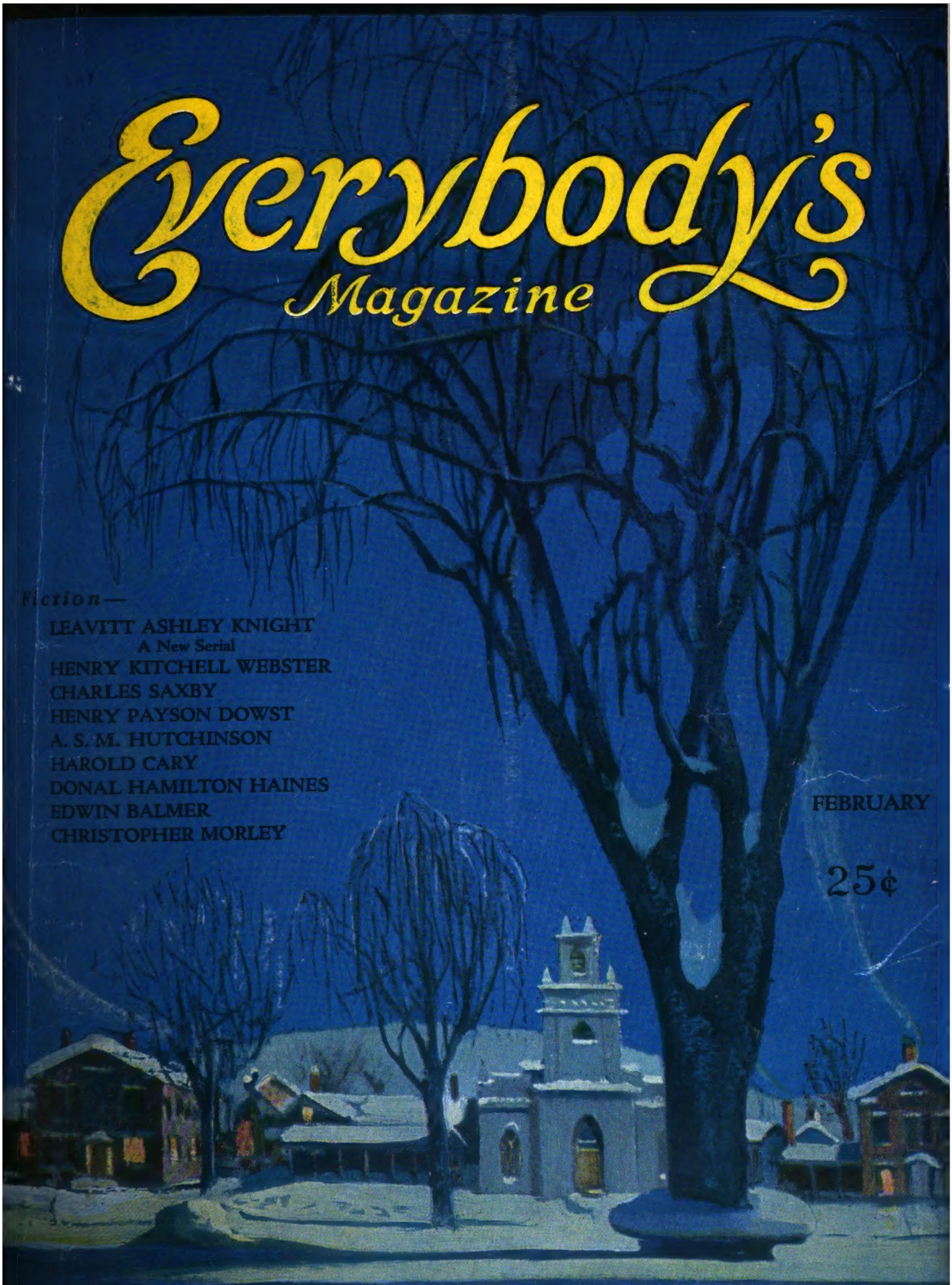

Beginning the Story of HERBERT HOOVER By Vernon Kellogg

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Everybody's Magazine

NUMBER TWO FEBRUARY, 1920 VOLUME XLII

Dictated—But Not Red

A Three-Part Story

By Leavitt Ashley Knight

Lung power, good looks, a million-dollar front, one hundred per cent. assurance, a beautiful Russian vampire, even patient little Martha, the girl he left behind—everything, everybody, Fate itself, seemed to dictate to Ira Cummins, the Boy Orator of Knob Hill, leadership of the Great Red Revolution. What happened—Leavitt Ashley Knight tells you in this strong, timely, humorous serial.

I

In which We Witness Portentous Perturbations in the Plaza of Platitudes.

THE wildest night old Union Square had ever seen was beginning. Patrolman Raggerty felt it in his bones as he scanned the crowd swarming New York's famed Home of Free Speech, this Plaza of Platitudes, where advanced thinkers advance their thinks. It wasn't the size of the crowd that worried Raggerty. It was those ominous limousines along the curb! Those evening clothes inside of them! The parlor Socialists were on hand—a sure sign that something big was to be pulled off.

Raggerty noted the famous Helen McVittle in her dull-green car, surveying the throng with kindly eye—the very lady who had leaped to Sunday Supplement fame lately by proving that Russia was five hundred years further along the road to Civilization than the rest of the world. Just behind her landaulet stood the crimson runabout of that flaming soul, Miss Annabel Hicks of White Plains. The crowd thrilled at the sight of Miss Hicks; for hadn't she just endowed a virile magazine of Radicalism? And hadn't she placed in the editorial chair that brilliant Boy Statesman of Avenue A, George Semosky, long the leader of Union Square?

And Maline Orowitz, too, the Bobtail Plush! Patrolman Raggerty hadn't seen her since he had arrested her, some two years ago, for inciting her hearers to loot the Sub-Treasury and spend the proceeds in emancipating the East Side. Maline had wedded one Alcibiades Popoloutikos, a wealthy Greek florist, and had found little time to carry on her Cause, because her lovely new home down at Long Beach was so far from town. Her hair was no longer bobbed, nor her dress that simple piece of mauve plush that had given her her nickname in the old days. But there burned in her great black eyes the old excitement as she surveyed the crowd.

"She'd never come here," Patrolman Raggerty observed gloomily, "if it wasn't for big doings. Oh, but I'm going to get that Cummins guy some day soon!"

This private allusion to the Cummins guy would have been comprehended by any member of the crowd. For hadn't the newspapers fairly bubbled with stories about the sudden, brilliant star in the Red firmament, a young orator, evidently a scion of some Best Family, masquerading under the pesudonym of Ira M. Cummins? Hadn't this so-called Cummins stirred Union Square as it hadn't been stirred since the days of Coxey's Army? He was no common soap-box ranter. He used every forensic trick with a veteran's ease. And he lashed his steadily growing audiences to a frenzy that caused an order to be handed down to Patrolman Raggerty to arrest the new menace.

Patrolman Raggerty had dragged this Cummins mystery off to the Tombs. Cummins made not the slightest effort to be released on bail. He flatly refused to tell anything about himself. And he summoned no lawyer.

In the four days he languished in the Tombs, the plain-clothes men quizzed the three Reds who had been hobnobbing with Cummins. They were Georg Burin, Ivan Morgolsky, late of the Moscow Soviet, and that vivid creature, Sophie Delatour, all well known to Raggerty of old as cunning and slippery toilers for the Red Revolution, and all lately suspected of having become the agents of a new and unknown master of plots.

"We can tell you nothing about Mr. Cummins," they all insisted—and then laughed. Plainly a conspiracy of silence!

Ira M. Cummins appeared at the bar of justice with a mysterious valise and a nervous smile. Raggerty and two plain-clothes men reviewed the seditious utterances. Then Ira M. Cummins took the stand and testified that he had said all these things, save for certain slight verbal variations, which he would urge the court to record and to call upon his accusers to verify. He recited his utterances, in a wonderfully modulated voice that thrilled the courtroom, and Raggerty had to admit that the minor differences of phraseology were all as the defendant had stated.

Thereupon Ira M. Cummins opened his valise and produced some books, which he opened and declaimed from. Every word he had uttered in his speech was a literal quotation from Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington and Daniel Webster most cunningly woven together. The courtroom howled. The judge had to clear it. Patrolman Raggerty, white with rage, took up his attack afresh. He asserted that it was perfectly plain, from the manner in which the defendant had orated and from his introductory remarks, and so on, that he had violated the Sedition Act.

"You attacked all organized government," said Raggerty.

Ira M. Cummins called for evidence of such attack. Then chaos! An hour later poor Raggerty was listening to his captain deliver a blistering lecture on the art of getting one's case down cold before going up against a smooth one like this Cummins mystery.

"You should have seen," raged the captain, "that you couldn't handle him the way you could a common soap-box shouter. He's one of these crank millionaires with an uplift hobby. I'll bet you he's got a private secretary, or maybe that crook Burin, writing up the whole yarn for the newspapers——"

"If he does that," Raggerty choked, "I'll—I'll break him——"

"If you're smart enough!" retorted the captain. "Maybe we'll get something on him. I've put two plain-clothes on his trail. At least we'll know by to-night who he is."

The newspapers certainly told the story with zest. Three of them ran large pictures of Cummins, and one managed to secure a brilliant interview, in which the man of mystery declared that he feared neither police nor court; that he was no common Red; that he was not opposed to all organized government, but, on the contrary, he strongly favored a more efficiently organized one; that he felt this country needed a Second American Revolution, with another Patrick Henry and a new George Washington.

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"George Washington," he announced, "fought against the tyranny of taxation without representation. I fight against the new tyranny of taxation with misrepresentation."

Six hours after this last utterance was flung forth to the chuckling world, every paper in town had seized upon the flash of wit; and Ira M. Cummins was famous.

II

In which the Great Dictator, not yet Red, Makes His Well-Staged Entry and Gives Law and Order an Awful Jolt.

HALF-PAST eight. The crowd had spread half-way across the wide pavement beyond the rim of the Square, and Morgolsky was still rounding up fresh herds of bench-warmers and strange bearded folk. Burin and Sophie Delatour, the rest of the Arrangement Committee, kept the space around the soap-box clear. A plain-clothes man sauntered past slowly and muttered to Raggerty that they hadn't managed to find out anything about their quarry. They had trailed him as far as Central Park, and there he had somehow given them the slip. He had ducked into the shrubbery and vanished with the skill of a professional second-story man.

"You keep quiet to-night," said he to Raggerty. "We're going to get wise to him for sure. Going to call for his military registration card——"

"But the war's over," Raggerty frowned.

"No, it ain't. The armistice is on, but the Peace Treaty ain't signed yet. We've a right to call for a show-down from his kind. If he can't flash the card, we pinch him. If he can, we'll at least learn all about him."

"I got a little rumor about him this afternoon," Raggerty growled. "Came from old Lettkin, over at the *Café des Penseurs*. Morgolsky talked too much while he was drunk. Told Lettkin that Burin and he are swinging a bunch of Reds over in Russia into line behind this Cummins. They're planning some sort of a knock-out for somebody——"

"I wonder!" mused Plain Clothes. "The Russian Reds sure are doing their reddest to get a foothold here. There is a rumor that a big guy from Petrograd has slipped into town with a trunk of real money and a big plot——"

Out of the north clattered a taxicab, drew up at the curb near the soap-box, and disgorged a young man. The stage effects were perfect. He alighted at such a distance and angle from the big street lamp that no shadow blotted out the triumphant smile on his face nor obscured his magnificent gesture of greeting.

The crowd roared. The young man lingered beside the curb, while Sophie Delatour shook his hand madly and Burin pressed back the excited enthusiasts, who threatened to overwhelm hero, committee, soap-box, and stage effects all at once.

As the roar became thunder, the young man doffed his hat and made a profound bow.

His height—nearly six feet—and his striking slenderness made the bow both a lengthy affair and unusually graceful. He bent like live hickory and whipped to perpendicular with a snap. The backward flip of his head as he straightened lifted the heavy black locks on his head and dropped them again across his brow in faint disorder.

There was a peculiar blend of triumph and melancholy in his gaze. His eyes, deep set above pale, bony cheeks, were the eyes of an ascetic. The deep grooves around his mouth betrayed much public speaking and profound discontent. "Here," any close observer might have remarked, "is the son of some evil old millionaire who has seen through the rottenness of his estates. Here is a pampered youth of high society who has wearied of champagne suppers, chorus girls, vermilion racing cars, and bridge parties, and has gone forth to make this dismal world a better place."

It was unmistakable. Except for his face, everything about him was Upper Fifth Avenue.

That hat!

A hundred poor devils in the crowd had spent their lives in lower Third Avenue shops weaving imitation Panamas. They knew a genuine forty-dollar one when they saw it.

That four-in-hand!

A hundred pasty-visaged girls around the soap-box were accustomed to cut and sew for the Trade, at eight cents per, feeble copies of just such gorgeousness as he was wearing; and well they knew that no five-dollar bill would buy the creation.

That shirt!

Many a worn old garment-maker had automatically appraised that exquisite silk and its exclusive pattern. There weren't five shops in Fifth Avenue that carried such stuff. And there weren't ten pieces of that pattern in any one shop.

That glorious brown suit!

A dozen master tailors had discussed the suit, many a time, at the *Café des Penseurs*, over their midnight *slivovitz* and *schafskaese*. One school held that the coat was the finest masterpiece of shoulder-padding they had ever seen and that nobody outside of Regent Street, London, could possibly have fashioned it. The other school furiously contended that the coat was not padded at all, but was the finest specimen of simple unpadded draping at the shoulders that had ever overawed New York.

The debate was not in the least cleared by some bushelmen who insisted that that particular marvel of fleecy brown with the vanishing white line in it had, to their positive knowledge, been ordered from Solomon Leppsitzsky for Hodder and Rodder, the most ultra-ultra of all society tailors.

Those soft kangaroo shoes! Genuine marsupial of fabulous price. Those robin's-egg-blue socks, of sheerest Yokahama! The dainty pink of the orator's fingers, not an hour escaped from the manicure's! Beyond all doubt, this genius had leaped directly from the Lap of Luxury. And he had come in a taxi only because his own chauffeur might let slip some word that would betray his identity, or else the police might jot down his auto-license number and make things hard for him at home, where his harsh, plutocratic parents wouldn't understand.

"Lot of good it'll do me to try to squeeze you!" growled Patrolman Raggerty, as he scanned Ira M. Cummins from the convenient shadow on the rim of the crowd. "Your corporation lawyer will prove that when I thought you were talking English you were really reciting the Lord's Prayer in Russian. Confound these rich idiots who play around with park bums!"

Ira M. Cummins leaped upon his soap-box. He lifted his long right arm. The gesture threw out a great central switch controlling all minds before him. The nervous currents died away. Speech ceased. Muscles halted. And men surrendered their ears, their eyes, their souls to him.

"Looks mighty bad," breathed Patrolman Raggerty to a brother officer. "He's got the bunch where he can make them do anything he says."

"And there's a gang of Reds in this old town," observed the other, "that are ready to go the limit. All they need is a leader——"

"A leader with money, you mean!" Raggerty sneered. "A chap to pay for printing handbills and fines and a press-agent."

"Right-o!" the officer nodded. "And a guy who shows up well in the limelight—like this little one. There he goes! Listen!"

"Comrades!" The orator began. "I am with you once more. The plutocrats have failed to crush me beneath the heel of their Law! You all know how I outwitted them. If you don't, just ask one of the gentlemen in blue and brass—over there behind a tree, near the curb. They're on duty to give information."

The crowd saw Raggerty and his brother cop. A whoop went up.

"Taxation with misrepresentation!" howled a bench-warmer. And the yells rose higher.

"Ah! Speaking of misrepresentation!" Ira M. Cummins thrust a hand into an inner pocket. "That brings me to the first glad tidings of this evening, my friends. We have been told that these police and the courts that back them up represent the American people. They tell us that themselves—the courts do. But I am beginning to doubt this."

HE DREW forth a thick packet of letters and waved them slowly like a magician's wand.

"Five nights ago I was arrested on this spot," said he. "That night in the Tombs my spirits were low. I felt I was alone, unprotected, unthought of, in the midst of unscrupulous foes. But the next morning Hope dawned with the sun. These letters began coming. They came from mansion and hovel. They are penned in the smooth speech of culture and in the rough but honest phrases of the sturdy toiler. They tell me to be of good cheer. They say that the world is smoking with rebellion, and that outrages such as that perpetrated against my person are swiftly fanning the sparks of wrath into the white, fierce flame of revolt. Mind you!" He brandished the letters at Raggerty. "I am not saying these things. I am merely quoting from these letters. And to prove it, I shall pass them through the audience in a minute.

"I am but the receiver on the telephone wire that runs to this Square from the great throbbing Central of Humanity. It is not for me to impose my thoughts upon the suffering millions. My simple

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Every word he had uttered in his speech was a literal quotation from Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and Daniel Webster most cunningly woven together.

duty is to voice the will of the people, to cry out in the market-places the thoughts that they whisper to one another in the privacy of their homes and workshops. The other day I quoted the words of Patrick Henry and George Washington. To-night I quote the American People. If that be sedition, make the most of it!"

He tossed back his head as he rose to this climax. The crowd went mad with laughter and delight.

"Now, my friends," he resumed, "I know what the gentlemen behind the tree will say. They will say that letters are mere words. They will say that talk is cheap. I grant that. But now I am going to quote something that makes a much louder noise than words." With swift legerdemain he flashed a roll of bills. "This money," he waved it toward Raggerty, "was enclosed in those letters. It came from men and women whom I have never met, never even heard of. They said they wanted to help me retain a lawyer for my defense. They begged me to use it to print my speeches and send them broadcast. They asked no reckoning. They only wished that their gifts be used to help along the Cause. Now comrades! I ask you! Who represents the American people? The gentlemen under the tree over there, who receive money wrung from taxpayers to arrest me? Or I, who receive money from free givers to be delivered from the clutches of the Law?"

For a swift instant the multitude stared at the great roll, from which unmistakably gleamed the yellow-backs. They let themselves linger spellbound by the flaming question in Cummins's pallid, tense face. Then, as if under the command of an orchestra leader, a thousand throats burst into thunderous triumph, as the orator swung his baton of bills. There was a deep, ominous rumble in the billow of sound that swept over the Square. It stiffened Raggerty's back, and it brought a fresh horde of passers-by pattering up to see what was doing.

"You beat it fast over to Lettkin's," whispered Georg Burin to Ivan Morgolsky. "Reserve Lettkin's back room. I'll bring him over in about an hour."

"You think he'll come?" Morgolsky quavered. "He never has. He's a hard one to——"

"Sophie's going to stick by him till he does," Burin said grimly. "She's got her speech ready. We've got to get him to-night. Ulovitch's orders, and hell if we don't! Run along fast!"

Morgolsky wormed his way through the crowd. Sophie Delatour smiled at Burin. Then, while the tumult was still raging, a plain-clothes man pushed his way up to Cummins and asked to see his military registration card.

The orator lifted both hands to his audience. "Comrades! A gentleman whom I have not the pleasure of knowing has just asked to see my military registration card. Now, the dear government has instructed us to keep our cards in our personal possession. I propose to obey the government. So may I ask you all kindly to observe that I hand it to him to read, and that he promptly returns it to me?"

"Leave the bloke to us, bo!" yelled a dozen beetle-browed individuals.

"Close in, fellers!" whooped others. And the throng suddenly contracted with the terrible ripple of power of a gigantic anaconda. The open space around the soap-box shrunk ominously. The wall of hard faces, clenched fists and glittering eyes drew up impenetrably around the plain-clothes man.

Ira M. Cummins smiled sweetly. From a rich leather wallet he extracted a card. Then to his army of defenders: "Comrades! The card I am about to allow the gentleman to inspect is a certificate exempting me from military service."

Cat-calls, shrieks, guffaws, hysterical hootings outraged the night air. The joke was too, too good.

"How the devil," Patrolman Raggerty muttered to a newspaper reporter, "did that fellow ever get exempted?"

"Ask his banker." The news-scavenger winked. "Those swells certainly can slick and slack. Nice little eel, ain't he?"

The plain-clothes man copied the exemption certificate and returned it. The crowd jeered. A sunny smile flashed from the orator, as he flung back his shoulders and began the address of the evening.

Oratory is addressed to the ear, not to the eye. How unfair, then, to reduce its sonorities to dead print! Suffice it for the historian to record that Cummins

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presented the many advantages of compelling all plutocrats to put on overalls and toil like any common man. The thought lends itself to a rich variety of pictorial effects.

III

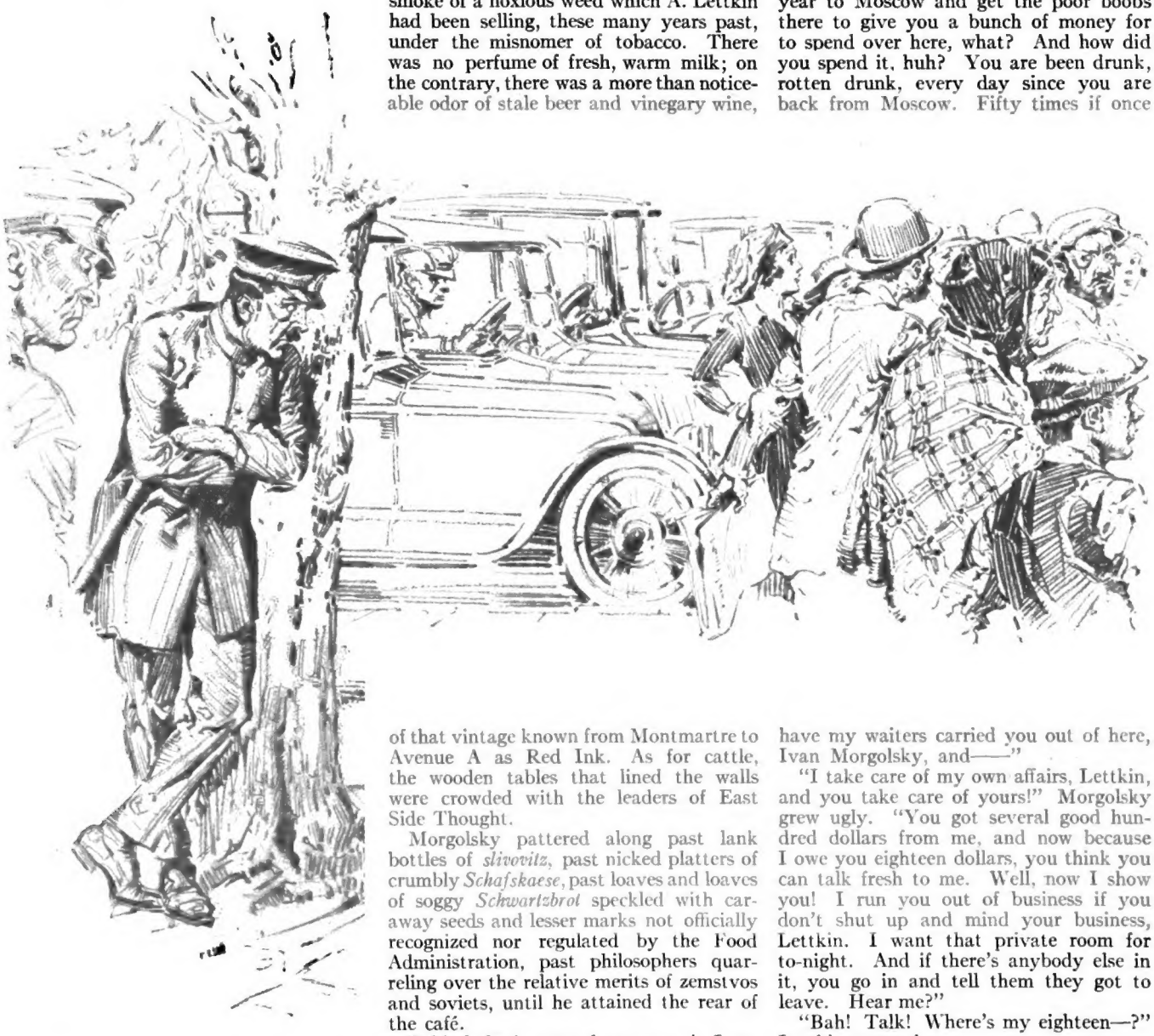
In which We Get a Taste of the Upper Crust of the Underworld.

IVAN MORGOLSKY pattered off, short of breath and shorter of stride, past the garish movies of Fourteenth Street. He plunged beneath the Third Avenue Elevated, then slowly increased his speed as he entered the darknesses of the long blocks of slumbering tenements beyond. At Second Avenue he ambled pantingly southward, then walked and ran until he came to a feebly lighted basement window, whose frosted pane bore the legend:

CAFÉ DES PENSEURS
A. Lettkin, Prop'r

Morgolsky paused one brief second of time. He eyed the door with a flicker of fear. His fat fingers tremblingly combed his curly black beard. They tugged at the hairs, as if the arms of him were striving to pull him along on his way faster than his head was willing to travel. The instant of irresolution passed. He leaped down the steps.

The room he entered was very long and very narrow, more like a cow-stall in shape than a café. The floor, too, strongly suggested a cow-stall, for it was deeply strewn with sawdust that was considerably the worse for wear. At this point, however, the rustic resemblance broke off with painful sharpness. The air was not fragrant with new-mown hay; it was supercharged with the gray-blue smoke of a noxious weed which A. Lettkin had been selling, these many years past, under the misnomer of tobacco. There was no perfume of fresh, warm milk; on the contrary, there was a more than noticeable odor of stale beer and vinegary wine, of that vintage known from Montmartre to Avenue A as Red Ink. As for cattle, the wooden tables that lined the walls were crowded with the leaders of East Side Thought.



Morgolsky pattered along past lank bottles of *slivovitz*, past nicked platters of crumbly *Schafskaese*, past loaves and loaves of soggy *Schwartzbrot* speckled with caraway seeds and lesser marks not officially recognized nor regulated by the Food Administration, past philosophers quarreling over the relative merits of zemstvos and soviets, until he attained the rear of the café.

Behind the bar stood, as ever, A. Lettkin, Prop'r. As ever, A. Lettkin was wiping beer glasses with a dingy towel and checking off the provender.

Morgolsky waved a good evening to A. Lettkin and propped an elbow on the bar. A. Lettkin did not wave in return. On Morgolsky he fixed an eye sharper than the tip of an icicle, and considerably chillier.

"'*Nabend!*" gurgled Morgolsky. "Now lissen: Is that private room there *b'setzt* to-night? What?"

"I say nothing to dead beats who don't pay their bills here," A. Lettkin rumbled. "Get out!"

"Now wait!" Morgolsky rubbed his hands. "Don't bite until after what you're got bitten. *Hab' Geduld!* I pay up all right some time the eighteen dollars what I am *schuldig*. You don't should worry. Now I got a propo——"

"I hear that before many a times," sneered A. Lettkin. Infinite contempt rippled from his moist lobster brow down, down, down to his nethermost chin, and vanished beneath a wilted No. 20 collar. "I got your number, Morgolsky, you bum. You are a good one for to spend other people's money as you shouldn't ought to. Maybe I don't know how you go last year to Moscow and get the poor boobs there to give you a bunch of money for to spend over here, what? And how did you spend it, huh? You are been drunk, rotten drunk, every day since you are back from Moscow. Fifty times if once have my waiters carried you out of here, Ivan Morgolsky, and——"

"I take care of my own affairs, Lettkin, and you take care of yours!" Morgolsky grew ugly. "You got several good hundred dollars from me, and now because I owe you eighteen dollars, you think you can talk fresh to me. Well, now I show you! I run you out of business if you don't shut up and mind your business, Lettkin. I want that private room for to-night. And if there's anybody else in it, you go in and tell them they got to leave. Hear me?"

"Bah! Talk! Where's my eighteen—?" Lettkin grunted.

"Now shut up!" Morgolsky fished from his pocket an aged silver watch. "I talk business, I do. You show this to Ikelstein the pawnbroker. He gives twenty dollars for it any time. I get your lousy eighteen dollars to-night or to-morrow and pay you, and you give me back the watch of my dear dead father. And I pay you your dollar for the private room. *G'schwind!* I got important *G'schaeft* to-night. With bigger people than never have come to this dirty hole, Lettkin."

A. Lettkin, calloused purveyor of pleasure, and cynic of mankind, scanned

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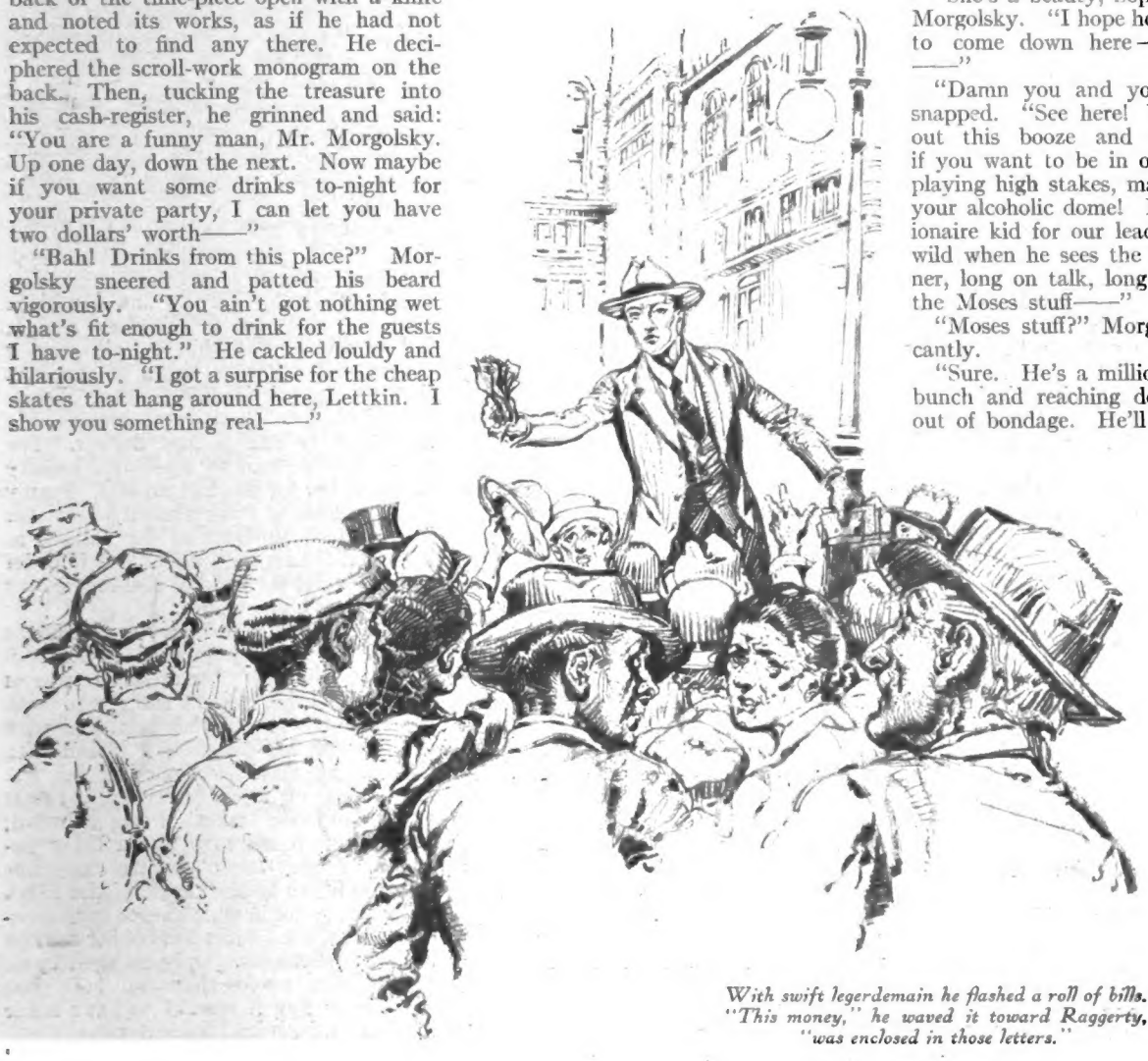
the watch minutely, then bulged a bewildered eye at Morgolsky. He pried the back of the time-piece open with a knife and noted its works, as if he had not expected to find any there. He deciphered the scroll-work monogram on the back. Then, tucking the treasure into his cash-register, he grinned and said: "You are a funny man, Mr. Morgolsky. Up one day, down the next. Now maybe if you want some drinks to-night for your private party, I can let you have two dollars' worth——"

"Bah! Drinks from this place?" Morgolsky sneered and patted his beard vigorously. "You ain't got nothing wet what's fit enough to drink for the guests I have to-night." He cackled louldy and hilariously. "I got a surprise for the cheap skates that hang around here, Lettkin. I show you something real——"



With swift legerdemain he flashed a roll of bills. "This money," he waved it toward Raggerty, "was enclosed in those letters."

"All right!" Lettkin mumbled. "Only I hope you don't try any rough stuff."

"Rough stuff?" Morgolsky drew up his fat form to its maximum height. "You got a nerve to say I do rough stuff! By God! I'll go somewheres else with my party. Give me my watch back——"

"Oh, now, see here!" Lettkin collapsed like a punctured balloon. "I was only joking. Here! Have a *slivovitz*—on the house, Mr. Morgolsky!"

Morgolsky poured an astonishing measure of *slivovitz* from the proffered bottle. "Trouble with you fellows, Lettkin, is you ain't got any notion about what we big fellows are doing. You think maybe just because we get short of cash sometimes we're down and out. Well, you don't know. Like what Burin says, it is always most darkest before the alarm clock rings. Now lissen! Don't you come sticking your nose into our party and pretending you thought we rang for drinks, and then hanging around to hear what we're saying, the way you do with that idiot Semosky. Hear?"

Lettkin stared in dismay at this terrible revelation of his methods. "Yes, Mr. Morgolsky. You needn't worry, Mr. Morgolsky. Strictest privacy. Have another drink?"

"What time is it by my watch?" demanded Morgolsky.

"Nine," replied Lettkin.

"If any one asks for me or Georg Burin, send him into the room," Morgolsky commanded. And he strode like a conqueror into the private place.

At ten o'clock Morgolsky began fishing every few minutes for his watch; and, not finding it in its accustomed pocket, he grew nervous. Every quarter-hour or so he sauntered out into the café, ordered another *slivovitz*, scowled at the still meek Lettkin, and wandered to the front door. Eleven o'clock. Morgolsky was worried, and A. Lettkin began to squint faint suspicion at him. Eleven-thirty, and then in blew Burin, a surly shadow on the sallow, sunken cheeks beneath his burning green eyes.

"Ach! You didn't bring him." A whimper crept into Morgolsky's speech. "And my watch is gone."

"Oh, shut up!" Burin snarled, and he dropped wearily into a chair as Morgolsky closed the door. "He'll be here. I knew he wouldn't come on my say-so. He gave the usual story—a business engagement at the Plaza, couldn't think of breaking it. Sophie went along with him. She's promised to stick by him and make him come down here. She's got him going, all right."

"She's a beauty, Sophie is," murmured Morgolsky. "I hope he likes her—enough to come down here — then my watch ——"

"Damn you and your watch," Burin snapped. "See here! You've got to cut out this booze and wild stuff, Ivan, if you want to be in on this game. I'm playing high stakes, man. Get that into your alcoholic dome! I've landed a millionaire kid for our leader. Ulovitch'll go wild when he sees the boy. He's a winner, long on talk, long on looks, long on the Moses stuff——"

"Moses stuff?" Morgolsky blinked vacantly.

"Sure. He's a million miles above the bunch and reaching down to lead them out of bondage. He'll lay down the law to them, you see; and they'll lap it up. Now when he gets here, you're not to touch him for a few iron men. Get me? You'll queer the whole business. And cut out the *slivovitz!*"

"Comrade, you forget the philosophy of Freedom which we all hold." Morgolsky grew moistly indignant. "Every man a law unto his self. You live your life. I live mine. You forget we are all——"

"Bah! I forget nothing." Burin thumped a bluish fist. "I remember how you blew in most of the twenty-five hundred bones you brought back from the Moscow Soviet on gin, Jennies, and Jazz. You tried to take up collections on the Square, and didn't get a cigar coupon. And look at Cummins! That roll he flashes! Four hundred and twenty dollars in it, he told me. And without asking for a cent of it, too! Just publicity! Free publicity from the fool papers!"

"If we only had maybe a hundred from it already!" Morgolsky sighed.

"Don't you go out for a dollar of it to-night! We're standing on our dignity just now. Those are Ulovitch's orders, and he's right; no more cheap-skating! We're just telling Cummins as one gentleman to another what he must do to become

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a great leader. We've got to show him that he must cash in at once on his free advertising and the run of popular feeling; and we've got to put him on our committee and leave the details to us——"

"That's it. The details to us," echoed Morgolsky feebly. "You be Treasurer, and I be General Manager, yes? But do you think you can talk him over? He is very stubborn——"

"He's stubborn, all right," Burin darkened. "But—I guess he won't be ungrateful. I've made the boy, and he knows it. Remember that first night he made a speech? That stuff about the poor labor unions? I spotted him then and there, and you know it, Morgolsky. I took him in hand, and told him how to catch the crowd——"

"Bah!" Morgolsky pooh-poohed. "He won't remember that. And anyhow he can tell you that he didn't need your advice. He's a professional speaker, that man is. Anybody could know it from hearing him, anybody should do. He can give you lessons, Burin——"

"WAIT a minute," Burin rasped. "It was me who got on to the cops listening for a frame-up on him. It was me who tipped him off and then taught him that stunt of stringing together those quotations from Patrick Henry and the other fellows. If it hadn't been for me, he'd have been convicted sure, and the papers wouldn't have run wild about him and the slick one he put over the cop Raggerty. And he wouldn't have pulled down half a million dollars' worth of advertising——"

"Half a million? Eh?" Morgolsky blinked wetly.

"I said it, and I'm an old newspaperman." Burin rapped his knuckles on the table. "I know what first-page stories, and Sunday specials are worth in cold coin. Ira Cummins in the last five days has got five hundred thousand dollars of advertising. Why! They've even run his story in Boston and Buffalo! It's the biggest chance we ever had! It's the chance I've been watching for for ten years. I can cash in on that half million, and don't you forget that. I know the game. I'm going to make every dollar's worth of printer's ink bring in two dollars to—the Cause."

"God bless our enemies—for this kind—hic—gift," crooned Morgolsky. The *slivovitz* was slowly seeping beneath Morgolsky's foundations. His red-veined eyeballs rolled uncertainly in the general direction of his fellow statesman, "I—uh—hope, comrade, the young man will appreciate all you have—hic—done for him. My dear, dead father gave me that watch—he made me promise to cherish it ever—glp——"

"If I hadn't let you in on this," Burin spoke gently, "because of Ulovitch and your Russian connections, and the money I've helped you spend, I'd drop you down the nearest manhole!"

"You—are a harsh man, comrade, but—hic—you mean well. We all mean well." Morgolsky smiled an angelic smile. "Ulovitch will like—hic—Cummins. Ulovitch should ought to know *b'schcid* about him. Ulovitch is——"

"We must start a big campaign fund to-morrow." Burin stalked up and down. "Every hour of inaction squanders thousands of dollars of that advertising. People forget fast. I must get letter-heads—call it the League of Freedom—Society for World Emancipation—The American Soviet? That's good. American Soviet! It'll tie us up with the fellows over in Russia. That'll save Morgolsky's face. It'll please Ulovitch too. Maybe we can get an appropriation from Petrograd on the strength of that name—God! That's the idea!"

He clapped his fists together and paced the room. Morgolsky sank soggily in his chair. His eyes closed slowly. Burin whipped from his pocket a second-hand newspaper that he had rescued from a park bench, and fell furiously to jotting notes on its ragged margins. The American Soviet was on its way!

Another five minutes, and Morgolsky was snoring. Burin leaned over the table stealthily, and ran agile fingers through his comrade's pockets. He came upon seven dollars tied with a string wound tightly around an inside button in the pocket. Burin softly broke the string, pocketed the find, and then marched out to A. Lettkin.

"Call a taxi and ship that old stew Morgolsky over to Ipkin's, Ipkin the printer, in Houston Street, you know. He rooms there," he commanded. And as he did so, he casually exhibited his new roll, now deftly wrapped around a wad of newspaper so that it looked like a hundred dollars.

"Right away, Mr. Burin." A. Lettkin made obeisance.

"And—see here!" Burin stepped close to him. "If anybody drops in and asks for me, or asks about me, just say that you know me well—you do, don't you?"

"Certainly; yes, Mr. Burin."

"And that I'm a very busy man, being the Treasurer of the Russian American Soviet in this city—no, in this country. Get that?"

A. Lettkin widened his eyes and gasped. "Yes indeed, Mr. Treasurer! I am most happy to know, Mr. Treasurer. Now whatever I can do for you, in the way of parties, you know, like what Mr. Morgolsky used to give—I make you special rates. Very special. You should see my menu for two-dollar dinner, wine included, Mr. Burin! They——"

"We'll see about dinners later." Burin wheeled back to the private room. There, surveying the slumbering comrade, he added gently: "Ulovitch must take you back to Moscow with him, my good friend. You can't stand American prosperity."

IV

In which the Arrangements Committee Does Some Arranging at Close Range, and is Somewhat Disarranged.

THE wildest night old Union Square had ever seen was ending in a carnival of bright Red joy. Ira M. Cummins, stepping off his soap-box, was mobbed by his admirers. Sophie Delatour flung her arms around him. Helen McVittle fought her way furiously from her dull-green car to the hero, caught up his slender right hand, and kissed it. A thousand unshaven garment-makers screeched strange foreign notes of exultation. A fat woman in a faded shawl flung her purse at Cummins and cried: "For the Cause, sir!"

The wonderful man looked into Sophie's face, and his smile melted into something deeper than mere joy over his amazing reception. If he saw no more than any observer, he saw enough to make him forget soap-boxes and applause and Second American Revolutions. He saw a creature, slightly below medium stature, pulsating with the energy of a regiment of ordinary women, yet with all that power, physical and mental alike, under control.

He saw a girl leaping out of luscious youth into mellow womanhood, a girl, a woman, a girl-woman—no one could say which. He saw amazing black eyes, eyes that were a dark glory, a night full of whispers, a thin curtain over a cavern of passions, a signal of messages that the tongue dares not utter. Every fresh look into those eyes discovered a new mystery and a new delight. The girl-woman seemed to sense this infinity of betrayals, for she had an odd, dreamy habit of looking away absently over her interlocutor's shoulder as she talked, as if she were shunning a direct look in order to keep secret the flood of soul-life flowing in the deeps of her glance.

Even the exquisite Miss Annabel Hicks and the artistically tailored Helen McVittle had to notice her dress. It was of a piece with her perfect satin skin, with the mellow brown of that skin, and with the flame in her cheeks that blazed with the healthy fever of abounding life. A soft dress, of a shade between russet apples and the ashes of apple wood; neither brown nor gray but a thing between. A gray tam-o'-shanter clung like a loving lichen to the tangle of the black locks that swept in wide curves symmetrical with the firm, sweet lines of her smooth neck and shoulders. Only an aged cynic would have noted that the hair was bobbed; cutting it seemed to have made it appear thicker and more rippling.

"I've booked you for the evening." She squeezed the orator's arm and dexterously steered her treasure into a taxicab.

"My!" she clasped her hands, as the car moved off up the Avenue. "They'd have torn you to tatters—they're so wild over you! I've saved your life, comrade! That evens our account——"

"Evens our account?" Cummins shot a puzzled glance at her.

"You saved my life; I save yours," she breathed.

"What? I saved yours?"

"To-night. Oh, I'm not joking!" She grew intense. "I was ready to give up. Everything was going wrong. The police were after me——"

"What? You too?" Cummins angered. "The cads!"

"And Burin's no match for them," she stormed on. "He's a good enough fair-weather leader—but the Cause will never run into fair weather. It's doomed to storm after storm. Burin hasn't the money to drive us through hard times. And he hasn't the brains. That's between you and me, you understand?"

"Of course!" Cummins nodded.

"I like Burin. He's keen in some ways," the girl went on. "But he's cursed with poverty! And—well, I must tell you—he hasn't as good a record as a leader ought to have——"

"Oh, dear!" Cummins grew grave.

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"That's fatal! A true leader must have a past which he can boldly unveil before his foes." Thoughtfully he drew forth a slender red memorandum book and jotted something down. "But what," said he, "has all that to do with my saving your life?"

"My whole heart, my career, everything is bound up in the Cause." Sophie seized his arm fiercely. "Ask Burin. He knows. And here was ruin ahead. Burin had funds to push the Cause. Morgolsky raised them—he went over to Russia and got them from the soviet in Moscow—only a few thousand dollars, to be sure, but enough to make headway. And now the funds are gone—Burin couldn't manage Morgolsky, and Morgolsky couldn't manage the money. And then the cops arrested you, and I was ready to lie down and die."

Ira M. Cummins straightened perceptibly; a ghost of a smile traversed his gaunt features. "Too bad! Doubtless Burin lacks sound business training. He strikes me—if I may say so in a friendly way, you understand—as a gentleman who has never moved in the larger circles of the world——"

"That's a friendly way to put it!" Sophie laughed bitterly. "He used to be a reporter down in Park Row. He never saw a fifty-dollar bill until Morgolsky showed up with the fund. Oh, it's been a tragic mess. But now everything's all right!"

"What do you mean—'All right'?" Cummins wheeled. "You've found somebody to take over the leadership in a large way?"

"I have! I have!" Sophie lifted those fathomless eyes of hers to his. "I've found a leader who can rally everybody around him and march us all straight ahead to the Second American Revolution!"

Cummins gave her a startled glance. "Who can it be?" he mused. "Not Annabel Hicks. Nor——"

"Oh, don't be silly!" Sophie pouted. "The leader is you, of course. And you know it."

"W-what? Oh, no!" Cummins stammered. "You're joking!"

Sophie tightened her lips and studied him briefly. "Comrade, you're a mystery," she declared. "You pretend that you don't see that you've made yourself the leader? You're a man of large means, a wizard at oratory, and a society chap. Not another radical in the country who can equal you. You——"

"But see here!" A note of alarm rang in Cummins's voice. "A fellow would have to give a lot of time to being a leader——"

"Well, rather!" Sophie laughed. "It's a career, a life work——"

"It's impossible!" Cummins groaned. "Much as I'd enjoy it. My business interests won't let me touch it——"

"Oh, business! The curse of progress!" Sophie stamped her radical foot. "Sell out your business. Turn your work over to your vice-president. Comrade! Don't let dollars stand between you and the greatest opportunity that ever came to a man. The whole world's talking about you. You're famous. You've received half a million dollars' worth of free advertising——"

"W-what? Oh, nonsense!" Cummins sputtered.

"Well, maybe a million then. You know that better than I do. All the more reason for cashing in on it. If you don't, you're cheating the Cause!"

Ira M. Cummins's lips twitched soundlessly. Then, in a mumble: "R-really? But how could I cash in on it?"

Sophie's jaw dropped. She seized his coat and shook him. "Say! You aren't staging this, are you? You really don't know? Well, holy gee! Say! You're a bigger mystery than ever. You've got me guessing!"

"I've never followed advertising specially." Cummins frowned. "In my business we seek customers—big ones—through salesmen. If you can tell me now——"

"Can I tell you!" Sophie glowed, and the joy in her eyes was that of a puppy that begs for a bone and receives a whole sirloin. "Listen! Turn the whole work over to me, comrade! I'll print your speeches. I'll send them all over the country. I'll get mailing-lists from Burin—we'll let him in on this, you know. He's a good sport, if he is slow. I'll fix up interviews for you. You'll talk to reporters on all the big affairs of the day. You'll get Annabel Hicks and her bunch to rally around you—they're wild to do it, you know. I'll open a campaign fund—let's

A. Lattkin, calloused purveyor of pleasure and cynic of mankind, scanned the watch minutely, then bulged a bewildered eye at Morgolsky.

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"Miss Delatour?" He bowed. "I'm Mr. Cummins's secretary. Mr. Cummins regrets that he'll be unable to join you this evening."

say for a quarter-million dollars——"

"Uh? Quarter-million?" Cummins wheeled a glassy orb toward her.

"Oh, I can raise that—through your social connections! Just watch me. That is, if you'll follow my instructions. First, you must drop the common old Union Square bunch. You must organize a big radical movement among the upper classes. Make it fashionable. Get nice people together at teas and dinners and all that. The country's crammed full of folks, comrade, who'd join us in a second, if they could only be persuaded that we had a fair chance of winning out. And there are still more folks who'd join us if we had leaders of social standing like you——"

"Really?" Cummins blinked his unbelief.

"I know it," she smiled. "They're snobs. They want to get on to the band-wagon with the brightest gilt. If we don't go after them, somebody else will. And remember, they've got votes and money and influence. That's what makes for success, isn't it?"

"Yes, yes." Cummins nodded vaguely. "But—all this sort of a campaign is awfully expensive, isn't it?"

"Of course it is!" Sophie laughed outright. "That's the very reason why Burin has failed. He hasn't the presence nor the prestige to win big backers. But you can do it. You needn't spend out of your own pocket more than a few thousand dollars—just enough to print some of your speeches and to give a few fine dinners, and a tea or two in your apartment at the Plaza."

"How did you know that I lived at the Plaza?" Cummins demanded sharply.

"Why, I've forgotten who told me," Sophie replied serenely.

"I don't want that to get around," Cummins declared with irritation. "As for this program you suggest, really, it's most alluring. But I simply mustn't think of it."

"You mean," Sophie gasped, "that you aren't sincerely interested in ridding the world of its oppressors?"

"A woman can't understand—in business a man isn't his own master," Cummins jerked. "My interests—they—I simply couldn't drop them."

"I don't expect you to." Sophie ouched his arm. "I only want you to be our leader. I want you to go on speaking as you have been. I and a very brilliant friend of mine will attend to the routine of your campaign. I want you to come with me to Lettkin's Café right now and talk it over with him. He'll convince you that we can do the work. Oh, what a chance you've got, comrade! To lead the common people in the Second American Revolution. Some day they'll make you President of the United States. And—how happy I'll be then!"

Ira M. Cummins's eyes were ... hypnotically on the bright light ... hotel whose portals they were a... ing. His lips were bone-dry, and ... throat twitched. He was plainly in the last stages of mental collapse induced by his desperate efforts to settle his whole future life in one minute of stage-fright.

They stepped within the sweep of the revolving door, and the sight of the gilt flunky turning it suddenly brought the orator back to his wits. His manner changed miraculously. He led Sophie past a hundred admiring eyes and tucked her into a corner chair off the main corridor.

"I'm awfully sorry, but I've got to leave you." He bent his face close to hers. "I'd like nothing better than to talk these great matters over with you all night. But I've got a very urgent engagement up-stairs——"

"You'll promise that you'll be the leader?" Her voice became a soft prayer. "And that I'll be a sort of general housekeeper to the Cause? And you'll come with me to Lettkin's?"

He laughed and caught her hand impulsively. "You're a wonder! You won't take No! And you've got all your plans laid, haven't you? I wish I could fall in with them. But—I'll have to think the whole matter over at great length——"

"I'll wait here till you've made up your mind," the girl remarked calmly. "Do they let ladies smoke here?"

"Oh, I say!" Cummins showed alarm. "You mustn't wait. I can't decide it to-night."

"Every hour you wait," she broke in firmly, "you lose ten thousand dollars of your free advertising. People forget terribly fast. Burin says if we don't have things well under way inside of a week, we can't cash in at all on the advertising——"

"Well," Cummins wavered. "Give me until to-morrow—say at noon——"

"To-night," Sophie interposed sternly. And in the caverns behind her marvelous eyes there seemed to rise up a dark spirit, gesturing threats. "I shall wait here. Please don't be long." And she settled back.

Cummins scrutinized her in helpless amazement. He scrutinized her in unconcealed and boundless admiration. She was a glorious thing. A glory made virile with will. She was as far above the run of girls and women who were loitering around the hotel as the gorgeous divan she lolled upon was superior to the park benches of Union Square.

"You are a power!" His face burned with a strange new flame. "You could make anything of a man—saint or devil!"

"I can make you great—and myself very, very happy, if you'll give me a chance, comrade. You and I, working together, can climb fast and far. And I'm not going to be held back from climbing by your little worries over arranging your business affairs. So hurry along, and come back with a quick Yes."

She reached out, seized his hand, gave it an imperative little squeeze, and flung it from her with a nervous laugh.

Cummins marched off. Her gaze trailed him, as he waved good-evening to one of the hotel clerks, wiggled a pink finger at the house detective, and vanished toward the elevators. Then she strolled restlessly around the hotel, eying the evening gowns of the women with cool, lofty appraisal, and drifting back every minute or two to the divan.

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Half an hour slipped by. Then up to the divan hurried a handsome young fop clothed even more wonderfully than Ira M. Cummins.

"Miss Delatour?" he bowed. "I'm Mr. Cummins's secretary. Mr. Cummins regrets that he'll be unable to join you this evening. Some gentlemen have detained him on very urgent business. He asks if you'll be so good as to lunch with him to-morrow at one at Berrillon's."

For an instant Sophie was a tigress glowering from a jungle at a fat buck that had eluded her fangs. Then the curtain fell, and the molasses-haired fop saw only an exquisite beauty smiling at him.

"Pray tell him," said she, "that I'll be there sure."

V

In which a Mysterious Conspiracy Appears as Through a Glass Darkly.

IRA M. CUMMINS emerged from the elevator and found his way to a familiar door, which a molasses-haired youth opened. The orator stepped into a magnificent apartment, flung his hat irritably at a divan, and intoned: "Bituminous! I'm worried. This life of mine is getting too strenuous. I want you to do me a little favor. There's a young lady downstairs who's wild over me. She's awfully nice, Trevison. Nicest sort ever. And such a head! Clever as they make them. But—for reasons I can't explain to you or to her, I simply can not take her out to a little midnight supper to-night. She's got her heart set on it, and I like her so much that, if I go down and tell her I can't go, she'll talk me into it—and I'll get in bad. Now, don't ask me to tell you why. Just run down to her, won't you, and tell her you're my private secretary, and that I'm sewed up here in an important business conference—mm—say, with some gentlemen from out West, or something like that. And ask her if she won't lunch with me to-morrow at Berrillon's—at one. Don't say anything more, for God's sake! Don't let her get you into an argument. She'll snarl you all up if you do. Cut it short. Be rude, if you have to. Get me?"

Bituminous laughed in admiration. "By George! How do you do it? No nice girl ever goes wild over me."

"Do that little job," Ira M. Cummins spoke with mystery, "and I'll tell you how you can make shoals of girls come running after you. Nice girls, too!"

"That's what you told me these clothes would do," Bituminous gestured ruefully at his exquisite garb.

"They will—in time—if you'll only live up to them," the orator prophesied. "That tie works out stunningly. It'll catch any girl's eye. Shirt's good, too—but not so gripping. But that platinum watch-chain's too soggy—almost vulgar. I warned you against it, old rutabaga! Didn't I?"

"Yes, but——"

"Trevison, be a good sport!" Cummins grew solemn. "Trot down-stairs and show the pretty lady off! Be my private secretary for two minutes——"

"Why the dickens are you always asking me to do queer stunts, Ira?" The Bituminous Boob wrinkled his brow. "Why do you always drop in on me evenings and ——?"

"Some day you shall know all!" the orator intoned with measureless mystery. "And you will be proud of the part you've played in——"

He paused, clapped a hand against a pocket, fished out his great roll, counted it, then exclaimed peevishly: "Confound it all! I forgot to cash a check—and I've got to pay for some—er—Say, old turnip! Let me have a couple of hundred overnight, will you?"

The Bituminous Boob fidgeted and grew turkey-red. "Ira!" He dropped his eyes. "I can't. The family lawyer's sore at me for lending so much money. He's made me cut it out—that is, maybe he'll let me lend you some after you've paid up what you owe me——"

"It's pretty late." Cummins moved swiftly but surely toward the door. "Now, please shoo away my lady friend. I'm going to duck out through the side door of the bar. By the way, if she asks where she can reach me by phone, or anything like that, be sure to do same as you've been doing—give your apartment number."

"Oh, all right, old carrot!" the taffy giant yawned. "If you'll introduce me to her some day."

"That's a go." The orator nodded, "if you'll can that watch-chain."

VI

In which a Number of Intimate and Delicate Facts are Revealed Concerning the Private Life of the Hero.

IRA M. CUMMINS hastened through the corridor that led to the café of the hotel, thence through a reception-room, and from there into a revolving door that flung him into the open air well away from the main entrance. He strode in feverish strides toward Columbus Circle. As he reached Seventh Avenue, he looked behind cautiously. When the nearest passers-by had gone several paces from him, the orator swiftly crossed Fifty-ninth Street and broke into a trot, ducking into the shadows of Central Park. Well within the low boundary wall, he leaped through a low hedge bordering the walk and ran at top speed across the forbidden sod, bending his course crazily for perhaps a quarter-mile, until he reached one of the main highways of the park. Here he relapsed into a leisurely walk, removed his exquisite Panama hat, tossed back his noble head and declaimed solemnly into the lonely reaches of the nocturnal sky: "May the curse of the Common People fall upon all plutocrats and their parasite lawyers!"

(*Continued on page 97*)

Then he returned to the mirror, and this time he saw in it, unmistakable in his full glory, the peerless leader of the Second American Revolution.

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The Story of Hoover

By Vernon Kellogg

I

CHILDREN

HERBERT HOOVER, known to all the world as the savior of Belgium, the Food Administrator of America, and the Director-General of Relief in Europe, and as a man who has wielded, without abusing, a power like that of kings and prime ministers, is strangely little known personally to the millions of Europeans who call him blessed and the millions of Americans who call him great.

What sort of human individual is he? What are the secrets of his success as a leader of men and women? What are the inner details of his methods as initiator and director of great organizations? And what was his life during the forty years before he burst into public view, like a meteor, in the black war night? Behind the silent but titanic war accomplishments of this man there is a story rich in romance and full of meaning for lovers of America.

EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE proposes to tell in a series of five articles the personal story of Herbert Hoover as related by Vernon Kellogg, one of his closest personal friends and an active assistant in all of his undertakings through the period of the war and the armistice. Dr. Kellogg was in Belgium and Occupied France with the Commission for Relief in Belgium, in the Washington headquarters of the United States Food Administration, and in Europe during the activities of the American Relief Administration. He is a professor in Stanford University, from which both Mr. and Mrs. Hoover graduated, and has known them ever since those college days. His story is thus based on both close personal acquaintanceship with Mr. Hoover, and active participation in his war-time undertakings. In addition he has free access to all of Mr. Hoover's private diaries and reports. Dr. Kellogg is, indeed, the one man to write the real story of Hoover.

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Pacific College, with Hoover at the age of 12. While attending this Quaker school he lived with his uncle and aunt, Dr. and Mrs. Minthorne, shown above.

IT WAS a great day for the children of Warsaw. It was a great day for their parents, too, and for all the people and for the Polish Government. But it was especially the great day of the children. The man whose name they all knew as well as their own, but whose face they had never seen, and whose voice they had never heard, had come to Warsaw. And they were all to see him and he was to see them.

He had not announced his coming, which was a strange and upsetting thing for the government and military and city officials whose business it is to arrange all the grand receptions and the brilliant parades for visiting guests to whom the Government and all the people wish to do honor. And there was no man in the world to whom the Poles could wish to do more honor than to this uncrowned simple American citizen whose name was for them the synonym of savior.

For what was their new freedom worth if they could not be alive to enjoy it? And their being alive was to them all plainly due to the heart and brain and energy and achievement of this extraordinary American, who sat always somewhere far away in Paris, and pulled the strings that moved the diplomats and the money and the ships and the men who helped him manage the details, and converted all of the activities of these men and all of these things into food for Warsaw—and for all Poland. It was food that the people of Warsaw and all Poland simply had to have to keep alive, and it was food that they simply could not get for themselves. They all knew that. The name of another great American spelled freedom for them; the name Herbert Hoover spelled life to them.

So it was no wonder that the high officials of the Polish Government and capital city were in a state of great excitement when the news did come, not from Mr. Hoover, but from the railway officials who were managing his train, that he was really moving swiftly on from Prague to Warsaw.

Ever since soon after Armistice Day he had sat in Paris, directing with unremitting effort and absolute devotion the task of getting food to the mouths of the hungry people of all the newly liberated but helpless countries of Eastern Europe, and above all, to the children of these countries, so that the coming generation, on whom the future of these struggling peoples depended, should be kept alive and strong. And now he was preparing to return to his

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own country and his own children to take up again the course of his life as a simple American citizen at home.

But before going he wanted to see for himself, if only by the most fleeting of glimpses, that the people of Poland and Bohemia and Servia and all the rest were being fed. And especially did he want to see that the children were alive and strong.

When he came to Paris in November, 1918, at the request of the President of the United States, to organize the relief of the newly liberated peoples of eastern Europe, terrible tales were brought to him of the suffering and wholesale deaths of the children of these ravaged lands. And when those of us who went to Poland for him in January, 1919, to find out the exact condition and the actual food needs of the twenty-five million freed people there, made our report to him, a single unpremeditated sentence in this report seemed most to catch his eyes and hold his attention. It did more: it wetted his eyes and led to a special concentration of his efforts on behalf of the suffering children. This sentence was: "*We see very few children playing in the streets of Warsaw.*" Why were they not playing? The answer was simple and sufficient: The children of Warsaw were not strong enough to play in the streets. They could not run; many could not walk; some could not even stand up. Their weak little bodies were bones clothed with skin, but not muscles. They simply could not play.

In Brussels; the children's daily meal under the flag.

A Touching Testimonial

SO IN all the excitement of the few hours possible to the citizens of Warsaw and the Government officials of Poland to make hurried preparation to honor their guest and show him their gratitude, one thing they decided to do, which was the best thing for the happiness of their guest they could possibly have done. *They decided to show him that the children of Warsaw could now walk!*

So seventy thousand boys and girls were summoned hastily from the schools. They came with the very tin cups and pannikins from which they had just had their special meal of the day, served at noon in all the schools and special children's canteens, thanks to the charity of America, as organized and directed by Mr. Hoover, and they carried their little paper napkins, stamped with the flag of the United States, on their heads as temporary caps. And out on the old race-track of Warsaw, these thousands of restored children marched from mid-afternoon till dark in happy, never-ending files past the grand-stand where sat their savior, surrounded by the heads of Government and the notables of Warsaw.

They marched and marched and cheered and cheered, and waved their little pans and cups. And all went by as decorously and in as orderly a fashion as any thousands of happy cheering children could be expected to, until suddenly from the grass an astonished rabbit leaped out and started down the track. And then five thousand of these children broke from the ranks and dashed madly after him, shouting and laughing. And they caught him and brought him in triumph as a gift to their guest. But they were astonished to see as they gave him their gift, that this great strong man did just what you or I or any other human sort of human being could not have helped doing under like circumstances. They saw him cry. And they would not have understood, if he had tried to explain to them that he cried because they had proved to him that they could run and play. So he did not try. But the children of Warsaw had no need to be sorry for him. For he cried because he was glad.

But the children of Warsaw were not the only children of Poland that Mr. Hoover was interested in and wanted to see. His Polish family was a large and scattered one; there were nearly a million children in it altogether, and some of them were in Lodz and some in Cracow and others in Brest-Litovsk and Bielostok and even in towns far out on the Eastern frontier near the Polish-Bolshevist fighting lines. But of course he could not visit them, and much less could he hope to visit all the rest of his whole family in Eastern Europe. For while an especially large part of it was in Poland, other parts were in Finland, Esthonia, Letvia and Lithuania, and some of it was in Czecho-Slovakia and Austria, and other parts were in Roumania and Jugo-Slavia. Altogether this large and diverse family of Mr. Hoover's in Eastern Europe numbered at least two million hungry children. And it only asked for his permission to be still larger. For the children of Hungary were clamoring to be admitted to it, and at least half a million babies and boys and girls in the countries already enumerated thought they were unfairly excluded from it, because they were sure that they were poor and weak and hungry enough to be admitted, and being very hungry, and not being able to get enough food any other way, was the test of admission to Mr. Hoover's family.

A Gigantic Work

WHEN the American Relief Administration, which was the organization called into being under Mr. Hoover's direction in response to President Wilson's appeal to Congress soon after the armistice, saw that its general assistance to the new nations could probably be dispensed with by the end of the summer of 1919, the director realized that some special help for the children would still be needed. The task of seeing that every underfed and weak child in all these countries of Eastern Europe, extending from the Baltic to the Black Sea, received its supplementary daily meal of specially fit and specially prepared food, could not be suddenly dropped by the American workers. There could be no confidence that the still unstable and struggling governments would be able to carry it on successfully. But with the abolition of the blockade and the incoming of the year's harvest, and with the growing possibility of adequate financial help through government and bank loans, the various new nations of Eastern Europe could be expected to arrange for an adequate supply of food for themselves without further assistance from the American Relief Administration.

Just what the nature and methods of this assistance were, and how the one hundred million dollars put into the hands of the Relief Administration by Congress were made to serve as the basis for the purchase and distribution to the hungry countries of over seven hundred million dollars' worth of food, with the final return of almost all of the original hundred million to the United States Government (if not in actual cash, at least in the form of government obligations), will be told in a later article. Also how it was arranged, without calling on the United States Government for further advances, that the feeding of the millions of hungry children of Eastern Europe could go on as it is now actually going on every day under Mr. Hoover's direction, until the time arrives, some time this summer, when it can be wholly taken over by the new governments.

But just now I want to tell another story.

For all this account of Mr. Hoover's sympathetic interest in the child sufferers from the Great War, and of his active and effective work on their behalf, makes one wonder about his own childhood. He is not so old that his childhood days could have been darkened by the one war which did mean suffering to many American children, especially those of the South. He was not born in the South, nor of parents actually afflicted by poverty, and did not spend his

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A "Hoover Army" in Poland, fully equipped with tin cups and pannikins.

early days in any of the comparatively few places in America, such as the congested great city quarters and industrial agglomerations of poor and ignorant foreign working-people, where real child distress is common; so he almost certainly did not, as a growing child, have his ears filled with tales of child suffering, or with the actual crying of hungry children.

There was one outstanding fact, however, in his relations as a child to the world and to the people most closely about him, which may have had its influence in making him especially susceptible to the sight of child misfortune. This is the fact that he, like many of his later wards in Europe, was orphaned at an early age. But he was by no means a neglected orphan; if anything, his memory still retains an impression of himself as a small boy rather eager, at times, to encourage among his relatives a certain degree of neglect which they seemed little disposed to give him. I hardly think that his personal experience as an orphan is a sufficient explanation of the passionate interest in the special fate of the children, which he displayed from the beginning of the war to its end.

Hoover's Child-Sympathy

NOR can the explanation lie in the coldly reasoned conclusion that the most valuable relief to a people so stricken by catastrophe that its very existence as a human group is threatened, is to let whatever mortality is unavoidable fall chiefly on the old and the adult infirm for the sake of saving the next generation on which alone the future existence of the group depends. This actual fact Mr. Hoover always clearly saw; but the thing that those close to him saw quite as clearly was that this alone accounted for but a small part of his intensive attention to the children.

It is, then, neither any sad experience in his own life, nor any sociologic or biologic understanding of the hard facts of human existence and racial persistence, that does much to explain his devotion to the health and comfort of the millions of suffering children in Europe. The explanation lies simply, although mysteriously, in his own personality. I say mysteriously, for, despite all the wonderful new knowledge of heredity that we have gained since the beginning of the twentieth century, the way by which any of us comes to be just the sort of man he is is still mostly mystery. Herbert Hoover is simply a kind of man who, when brought by circumstances face to face with the distress of a people is especially deeply touched by the distress of the children, and is impelled by this to use all of his intelligence and energy to relieve this distress. What we can know of his inheritance and early environment may indeed reveal a little something of why he is this kind of man. But it certainly will not reveal the whole explanation.

The children of Warsaw could not play—till Hoover's food came in.

Herbert Hoover, or, to give him for once his full name, Herbert Clark Hoover, was born on August 10, 1874, in a small Quaker community of Iowa which composed, at the time of his birth, most of the village of West Branch in that state. That is, he usually says that he was born on August 10, but sometimes he says that this important day was August 11. He seems to slide his birthday back and forth to suit the convenience of his family when they wish to celebrate it. He does this on the basis of the fact that when, in the midst of the general family excitement in the middle of the night of August 10-11, one of the busy Quaker aunts present bethought herself, for the sake of getting things straight in the family Bible, to say: "Oh, doctor, just how long ago was it that baby was born?" she got the following answer, "Just as near an hour ago as I can guess it." Thereupon she looked at the clock on the wall, and the doctor looked at his watch, and both found it exactly one o'clock of an important new morning!

His Ancestry

HERBERT'S Quaker father, Jesse Clark Hoover, died in 1878, and his Quaker mother, Hulda Minthorne, in 1884. The father had had the simple education of a small Quaker college and was, at the time of Herbert's birth, the "village blacksmith," to give him the convenient title used by the town and country people about. But really he was of that ambitious type of blacksmith, not uncommon in the Middle West, whose shop not only does the repairing of the farm machines and household appliances, but manufactures various homely metal things, and does a little selling of agricultural implements on the side. Jesse Hoover's mind was rather full of ideas about possible "improvements" on the machines he repaired and sold.

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Oceans of Hoover soup for the kids of Warsaw.

His two sons, Herbert and Theodore, and Herbert's two sons, Herbert, Jr., and Allan, are all rather given to the same "inventiveness" about the home. The womenfolks of the present Hoover families are always finding something useful about the kitchen dubiously "improved," or even made by a chameleon change into something quite different—and usually quite useless, at least from their point of view.

Hulda Randall Minthorne Hoover, Herbert's mother, was a woman of rather unusual mental gifts. After her husband's death she gave much attention to church work, and in 1883 became a recognized "preacher" at Quaker meetings. In this capacity she revealed so much power of expression and exhortation that she was in much demand. Her death in the next year came from typhoid fever. Those who knew her speak of her "personality." They say that she had color and attractiveness, although she was unusually shy and reserved. One can say exactly the same things of her son Herbert.

The immediate Hoover ancestry is Quaker. The more remote is Quaker mixed with Dutch and French Huguenot. All of Herbert's grandparents were Quakers, and the Quaker records run back a long time. One of the family branches runs into Canada, with the story of a migration there of a group of refugees from the American colonies during the Revolution. These emigrants came from prosperous farms in Pennsylvania, but while they wanted to be free from England's control, they could not, as Quakers, agree to fight for this freedom. So the neighbors made it "unpleasant" for them, and they packed up their movables and *trekked* into Canada. Another Canadian branch, French Huguenot in origin, has traditions of hurried removals from France into Holland before St. Bartholomew's Night, and of later escapes into the same country.

But all finally decided that Europe anywhere was impossible, and hence they determined on a wholesale emigration to Canada. Here by chance they settled down side by side with the little persecuted Quaker group which had come from Pennsylvania. Close association and intermarrying resulted in the Quakerizing of the European Huguenots—their beliefs were essentially similar, anyway—so in time all the descendants of this double Canadian line were Quakers.

Family tradition has it that the Dutch Hoovers (spelled with an *e* instead of the second *o*) were very well off; that there was a *von* before the family name, and that the head of the family that came to Canada was a real count! But this is the best that the present Mrs. Herbert can report for all the efforts of the grandmothers to find nobility in the Hoover lineage. As one of them said tragically: "It is really terrible to know *all* one's ancestors for six or eight generations, and not find the trace of even one earl among them." It seemed so unfair that any family coming over from Europe should not be able to find at least one earl perched somewhere in the family tree!

There were two other children in Jesse and Hulda Hoover's family: one a boy, Theodore, three and a half years older than

(*Continued on page 84*)

Some Czecho-Slovak children who will remember Hoover's name.

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"You made him understand how excessively important to the world these pictures will be?"

In Camera

By Charles Saxby

I

IT WAS in Loanda Pequeña that they picked him up, and it had been a case of sheer necessity to do so. Nothing less than that could have induced the widely advertised Alphin Expedition, as exclusive as it was scientific, to add to its personnel such an unaccounted-for young American as Len Sears.

Ward was the one who discovered him. As transport officer it was Ward's particular business to discover whatever might be needed just where it might be needed, even to a moving-picture camera-man on the uttermost coasts of Africa. Much the youngest of them all, his background more that of athletics than of learning, his province was the physical and material efficiency of the expedition. He seemed to embody it as he walked the streets of Pequeña, wide and empty under the sun, the huge Portuguese-African houses rising like pink and yellow cliffs against the sky. A noonday pall of sun and silence; enormous palms nodding drowsily, and himself apparently the only one awake in all the sleep-stricken town. Blond, cool, habitually unhurried, he moved amid those exotic surroundings with the slightly

Here's a remarkable story of science and the movies in the depths of Africa. More stories by Charles Saxby—always vivid, always original—are coming soon.

conscious all-rightness of New England family and the most accepted of universities.

While his body walked the street his mind was back with the man whom he had just left. It was at the English Club that Ward had first got wind of Sears, and that morning he had run him to earth in a doubtful quarter across the Guinimaca Ravine. Now as he returned he found himself going over that interview again with some perplexity.

A bare room, somber with the shadow of the half-closed shutters and done in that rasping blue paint that marks the trail of the Portuguese across the globe. A battered suitcase, on top of it a ukulele. On a table a near-linen collar, a wooden-backed hair-brush, some shaving tackle and a can of talcum powder; such seemed to be the worldly possessions of the occupant, who lay stretched out on a cot with a discouraged cigaret between his lips.

A wiry fellow, with a mop of hair severely clipped about the ears, dressed in khaki riding-breeches, stained leather puttees, tan shoes and a striped shirt which was turned collarlessly in over the thin bones of his chest. In all the months and vicissitudes through which they were to be together, Ward never saw Sears in any other attire. He seemed to wear it all day and most of the night as well, with as little concern as though it had been some kind of an accepted uniform.

From his looks he might have been any age from twenty-four to twenty-eight. From his manner he might have been in any place, even to where he actually was. It was his eyes that gave the latter impression; not that they were remarkable in themselves, but he had a trick of narrowing his lids and surveying his surroundings with that steady detached criticism which one gives to a mere picture.

He surveyed Ward in the same fashion, as the other, in immaculate white, stood framed in the doorway against the dazzle of equatorial noon outside. It was probably in that moment that antagonism had first sprung up between them; the immediate disapproval of a young man for another trained to an entirely divergent view of things.

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But even so, in his scrupulous fairness Ward was trying to formulate a report on Sears that would be unbiased by mere personal feelings.

Of course that came really from his loyalty to the expedition in this, its first moment of necessity. Kenney, who had undertaken to make the films of their travels, had just shown conclusively that his three months' training in a technical laboratory had failed to fit him for the rough and tumble of "shooting" in the open. And, apart from their scientific importance, those pictured records were pledged to the Cosmic News Syndicate, and the heavy advance payment for them had been one of the expedition's main finances. To bring an operator from America would entail two months' delay, and with the dry season already begun in the Congo hinterlands, that might prove fatal to their dash in search of the rumored ruins of Zakembwe.

The others would be waiting for his report on Sears, Ward knew, and he found them braving the noonday drowse in the patio of the hotel.

A CURIOUS group to be seen against that violent background of pink walls and orange-colored creepers. Alphin himself, explorer and writer, marked with the indefinable stamp of a man perpetually before the public. The veteran of Inca researches among the Andes, a man whose life seemed to have been spent in going somewhere and then writing a book about it.

He was fifty at least, burned brick red by tropical suns, his hair whitened by tropical fevers. As he sat there in a certain tremendous aloofness, with a hint of harshness about his mouth, he looked one more apt to prove a driver than a leader of men.

Across from him was Kenney, the doctor of the expedition; small, brown, nervously energetic, the author of widely syndicated articles on "Healthy Homes," and startlingly like the postage-stamp photographs of himself that always accompanied them. Between the two sat Strobridge, the authority on ethnology from the most endowed of American colleges. A large man, his massiveness blanked over by years of the platform to something of the semblance of a façade.

Looking at the three, Ward felt a thrill of young delight at being permitted to be the associate, in such an affair, of men so splendidly accounted for. Each one of them carefully selected for this attempt to solve those mystic inscriptions of Zakembwe, whose rumored existence was one of the few remaining mysteries of Africa. No wonder that the Cosmic News had offered such a price for the pictures of the expedition. Then, remembering Sears, he wondered how it would be possible to incorporate such a fellow into a company like this. But then again, there was that drive of sheer necessity.

"Of course, Chief, he is hardly—well—one of us," he was saying to Alphin. "But the chap seems to understand his business."

"You say that he came to Africa with the 'Hunting in the Sahara' pictures?" Alphin asked.

"The consul supports his claim."

In his effort to be fair to Sears, Ward had decided to suppress much of their interview. Back of his silence he could see Sears again, cross-legged on his cot, coolly exposing the true inwardness of motion-picture making.

"Of course, most of the Sahara stuff was shot in the zoo at the Los Angeles studio. But the supporting scenes, the 'safari on the march' and all that dope, had to be real stuff, you see. You can't fool the public on that kind of thing any more—so we came here."

So they had come there, to Loanda the Lesser, traveling ten thousand miles to the worst fever hole on the face of the earth that they might get "real stuff" for the rounding out of what he was acknowledging to be a fake. Back of it Ward caught a perplexed glimpse of a topsy-turvy world in which reality and deception were oddly mixed; the one seemingly no more than the other; truth made a prop to sheer fiction.

"And you stayed on here?" he asked.

"It sure looks like it," Sears answered, with a glance at his surroundings. "They went broke, you see; there wasn't money enough to take us all back, and I was the one best spared. I'm not worrying; the picture is a winner, and as soon as they get the money they'll look after me. They are good guys."

Ward had stiffened again at that, finding himself unable to understand this calm sitting down in Africa, waiting on the goodness of "guys" ten thousand miles away. It annoyed him afresh that Sears, sitting there cross-legged with the poise of a slightly world-worn young Buddha, should suddenly loom into his experience as an actual necessity.

Then Alphin's voice, with its familiar grate, brought him back to the present in that somnolent courtyard. "You made him understand how excessively important to the world these pictures will be?"

Ward hesitated again; if there were one thing of which he was convinced it was that Sears had no idea of the excessive importance of anything at all.

"You thoroughly explained the nature of our enterprise?" Alphin continued.

Ward almost smiled, but remembered in time that Alphin was not partial to smiles while he was speaking. For an instant Ward was back in that blue smear of a room and Sears was the speaker:

"What kind of a story is this that you are putting on?"

"A scientific expedition can hardly be called 'a story,' can it?" Ward parried, and Sears nodded understanding.

"Oh—I get you—educational stuff. But we call them all stories, you know. You say you're going up country?"

"It will take three months to get there—that is, if there is really any 'there' to get to," Ward had answered. "No one has seen Zakembwe yet except poor Graham, and he is dead."

"Then if nobody knows what it is like you can make it what you please," Sears yawned. "If it is pictures you are after, I can get them for you right here—jungle, desert, any kind you want—all within twenty miles."

The fellow was impossible—like all these moving-picture people. It seemed hopeless to make him understand what this expedition might mean to science.

"But pictures taken round here would hardly be Zakembwe, would they?" Ward asked, unable to keep the ice from his tone.

The other caught that ice, and as he flicked the ash from his cigaret there came again that narrow-lidded glance which seemed to shed all concern.

"Whatever you get, it will be just pictures, won't it?"

To Ward, walking back under the relentless sky, that phrase had seemed the keynote of the whole interview. It was in such contrast to his own faithfully shouldered burdens of the past months of preparation, and those burdens he was to shoulder in the months to come. Nearly a thousand miles overland to the unknown reaches of the Arukai, beyond the farthest yet of any white foot except poor Graham's. A thousand miles of fighting through those subtle barrages of fever and inertia with which Africa repels her invaders. An implacable vastness across which they must struggle, like insects over a sticky fly-paper.

And all of it, according to Sears, ending in "just pictures."

Ward had spoken those words aloud, halting under a huge and purple tree that dropped filaments of golden pollen all over him. He thought that pollen must be bitter, but the taste came really from the phrase that had been upon his lips:

"Just pictures."

He spat it out disgustedly; it somehow seemed to take all the dignity of substance from the affair. He had to admit that it rather took away the burden as well, but he was still at an age when there seems something fine in bearing burdens.

But Alphin was speaking, his glance resting upon Kenney, who was still quivering with the hurt of having his laboratory training in photography upset by the brutalities of nature.

"It seems that we have no choice—under the circumstances," Alphin said, his tone curling about the little doctor like the flick of a whip. "But if we take this young man we must see to it that he is kept absolutely in his place."

"Oh—absolutely," Kenney murmured in eager agreement.

"In my previous expeditions I have experienced the trouble that can be made by men not in sympathy with the highest aims of the affair. But I will see this man and if he is at all possible we can start in three days."

WARD'S pulses leaped at that announcement. To start at once, out through the half-known into the still mysterious, with all of Africa under their feet to be walked upon. To be really off for fabled Zakembwe, and under the leadership of Alphin himself. It was almost a prayer that he breathed, that Sears might be found possible.

That prayer was granted, for nothing could count against the sheer luck of finding a camera-man, and an American at that, in such a place. As Sears appeared in the patio of the hotel that evening Ward felt a flush of gratitude to him for simply being there.

"Say, I found one of your chief's books down at the consul's this afternoon," Sears remarked by way of greeting. " 'On the Trail of the Incas,' it's called."

He paused, and Ward waited confidently for the customary burst of admiration for that most widely known of all Alphin's works. The brilliantly — if somewhat bitterly — written record of hardships,

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endurances and almost discoveries that had ended in a tragedy of disagreement and the enforced return from the icy heights of Irabamba. He waited long, while Sears leisurely fitted a cigaret into the accustomed corner of his mouth and lit it. Then across the first puff of smoke, came a glance of level penetration.

"Say, he sure seemed to have it in for the fellows who went with him."

"What can you expect?" Ward asked with some heat. "Men who went back on him like that at the very last. They must have been a pretty poor lot."

"Oh, I don't know," Sears responded slowly. "To me they seemed just kind of human—same as you or me."

There was no doubt but that the chap would have to be kept in his place, and all the more so since the things he said had such an uncomfortable trick of sticking in one's memory.

Hastily Ward remembered the description in Alphin's book of that scene on the ice-swept Andean plateau, in which by the rebellion of his colleagues, the explorer was forced to turn back with his goal still unreached. In a fervor of loyalty he determined there should be no such miserable ending of failure and disagreement to this Zakembwe affair. That loyalty deepened as Alphin, coming out to dinner in the patio, lost no time in indicating to Sears his precise standing in the expedition.

Glancing round the courtyard, glaring with oil-lamps and clamorous with the seven tongues of Loanda's drifting and dubious white population, he nodded to a table at some distance from their own.

"We sit here," he announced. "Your dinner, Mr. Sears, will be served to you over there."

A moment only, a few words delivered in a tone of accustomed authority—but the sights and sounds of that moment were to recur to Ward again and again in the months to come.

Alphin, standing as usual a little apart, wrapped about with the atmosphere of the difficulties and dangers approaching them and with which he alone could expect to cope. Kenney, acutely conscious in Sears's presence of his own photographic failure, and striving to cover it by an added dignity. Ward himself, gazing at Alphin in a sort of hero-worship, and opposite to them Sears, in his curious detachment.

The fellow was taking it well, there was no denying that. There was no trace of resentment about him, or of disturbance of any kind; merely that steady narrow-lidded stare that seemed to reduce everything, even the redoubtable Alphin, to the unsubstantiality of a mere picture.

Sears, sitting there cross-legged with the poise of a slightly world-worn young Buddha.

II

THOSE weeks across the arid hinterlands of Loanda Pequeña were to remain in Ward's memory as the golden days of the expedition.

It was all so splendidly like the books of exploration that he had devoured as a boy: the evening camps with three sleeping-tents for the white men already set up, the two hundred Somali porters swinging in from the line of march laden with supplies, and the two whaleboats cut into twenty sections each, in which they were to adventure the half-known stream of the Arukai. Mornings, with the Southern Cross paling before the dawn; a reek of wood smoke through the twisted euphorbias, and the sound of Atta Baidoo, the headman, clumping up on wooden clogs for his daily consultation with Alphin.

A wizened old Sokotan with perhaps a lick of Arab in his blood, Atta's fame was abroad over the world, for he had been headman to three great explorers, passed on from one to another and written of in all their books. As he clumped by, lean, incredibly ugly, muffled to the mouth in dark-blue country-cloth, Ward would catch the spark of command in his eyes and thrill at the thought that he also was going down into Africa, and with the man who had been with Lorton and Welles, who had run the rapids of the Upper Kasai with Maynard's despairing little band.

And to Atta Baidoo was due the present expedition, for it was he who had discovered poor Graham dying alone in the thousand-mile swamp-hole back of the Congo. It had been too late to save Graham, but Atta Baidoo, faithful to that white-man fetish of writing, had brought Graham's manuscript to the coast. Those stained and incoherent pages telling of the discovery of the ruined pyramids of Zakembwe beyond the Südd; pages of which none could say, as yet, whether they were fact or merely fantasies of fever.

Of Sears, though for weeks they had occupied the same tent each night, Ward knew little more than on their first meeting. By day the exigencies of the march kept them apart, and the unavoidable intimacies of the nights had settled into a sort of ritual in which their minds, like their bodies, slid smoothly by each other without actual contact.

There had been conjecture as to how Alphin would settle the question of Sears's position while on the march, and still guard for him the necessary dignity of a white man. Now they were wondering which of the two could really claim the honors of that settlement. The first night camp had been a confused affair, and Sears, busy with almost mystic rites over his camera, packing the day's drum of film away into light-proof, water-proof, everything-proof cases, had not been seen until the others had already risen from the camp table set under a huge carob-tree. Then he had sauntered up with a cool "Gee, I didn't know I was so late," and not even Alphin's glance, like the blow of a blunt ax, could dent his air of faint amusement.

So it had gone ever since, and they were accustomed now to the sight of Sears

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dining by himself off half-cooled food. Sitting alone, the two brown half-nude camp-boys standing at attendance behind him, he had a way of making that solitude seem more an honor than anything else, as he gazed out at the world with that effect of being just about to turn the crank of an invisible camera.

The barren hills of the littoral fell away behind them, and each day took them more deeply into an appalling fecundity of vegetation. A green and dripping gloom that tore and clawed as one passed, with never a glimpse of the sky save at some stream wide enough to break the overhanging arch of foliage. The very heart of Africa, penetrable only by those strange immemorial bush paths of just sufficient width to permit the passage of a body. Who made them, by what feet they were kept open, Ward could never find out; for the land seemed sunk in inhuman silence, deserted and empty under a darkness which not even the glare of midday could relieve. Yet there were times when the whole bush was filled with a sense of watching, as of eyes hidden behind every branch, peering out, as they passed, with a mixture of animal fear and curiosity. Then again, waking to the heavy heat of the tent, its flaps closed against the cloud of insects outside, he would feel the night vibrate to the growl of distant drums, like a pulse beating deep down in the earth.

Once with the crash of a breaking branch a creature sprawled across their path. Dwarfish, yellowish, armed with a futile-looking little bow and arrows, it squatted, shivered and blinked up at them, while across Atta Baidoo's face there passed a wave of apprehensive disgust. Then came a sudden spring and the naked thing was gone again behind the screen of leaves, to spread Heaven only knew what report of them through that black mystery of trees.

That evening as he passed Alphin's tent Ward heard Atta Baidoo speaking inside. Unintelligibly his tones came, low and earnest, with a kind of pleading insistence that rose once to a note of warning, immediately cut short by Alphin's familiar ring of determination:

"I went into all that very thoroughly before I chose this route. We are too far south of them—they never range this far. When I want your advice, Atta, I will ask it."

ONCE only in all the march did they encounter a white man, a Belgian ivory raider returning to the coast with his spoils. A picturesque sort of buccaneer, rioting across Africa with a crew of hard-bitten Swahilis and a few flaunting drudges of black women, arrayed in scarlet rags and copper wire. Gorgeously drunk, babbling obscenely, he remained through the noon rest until at last, unable to stand, he was packed into a hammock by his adoring niggers and carried off, waving farewell with an empty gin-bottle. As he disappeared again back into that unknown from whence he had come, Ward drew a breath of clean relief.

"What an unutterable brute!" he exclaimed to Sears, who was busily photographing the departing outfit.

"He gets away with it though," Sears answered, carefully blinding his camera. "I can see one thing—your half-and-halfers don't go in this country; to take Africa safely you've got to be almighty tough—or almighty straight."

"And which way are you proposing to take it?" Ward laughed, but his sarcasm slid off from the other's look of surprise.

"Me? Oh, I'm not taking it at all, thank you. All I'm taking is pictures."

A queer fellow, Ward thought impatiently; a chap of one idea only. And the worst of it was that one could never make out what he might be thinking of one behind that stare of his. Then on again, the bush closing relentlessly about them, all subjectivities wiped out in the sheer struggle to keep going.

It was well into the second month when that Bush suddenly showed its teeth. A confused waking to the conviction that something was wrong. A man's shriek that came throbbing across the darkness. There seemed to be rain pattering on the tent, then a queer, gummy sort of stick ripped through the canvas and slid snakily across Ward's blanket. Instantly Sears's hand gripped his wrist and there came a whisper:

"Don't touch it—poison. Atta Baidoo told me about this."

Outside, a smear of moonlight through the trees cast a greenish darkness in which men seemed to swim with the staring aimlessness of fish in an aquarium. There was a crackle of firearms; Alphin's tones, tense and quiet, issuing orders. Before the tents were Kenney and Strobridge, pumping lead at the trees; near them a negro writhed in convulsions, one of those little sticks protruding from his side. Among the porters Atta Baidoo, gray with the fear of something which he alone understood, was busy with whip and voice.

Ward's chief emotion seemed to be an angry disgust at the senselessness of the attack. The worst of it was that there seemed nothing to fight against, no sight nor sound of an actual enemy, merely that patter, patter of poisonous little sticks falling from all around, as though it were the very place itself that had turned against them. Their ring of bullets was plowing the tangles, but that remorseless pattering kept on; two more of the Somalis were hit, and Ward's own pajama jacket was pinned behind him by an arrow that had barely missed his skin.

Sears was nowhere to be seen; probably he was hiding in the tent, Ward thought contemptuously. Then he saw him, carrying what for one hopeful instant looked like a machine gun, but it was only his camera after all. He was scratching a match, and even as Alphin shouted to put out the betraying light, there came a flash. It came again, with muffled detonations like blows from a wadded stick; flash after flash of intolerable brilliance in which everything stood out as plainly as a picture on a screen; the brightest light that, in all the ages, had ever shone in that core of African darkness—and with it came the grind of the camera-crank.

The fellow was actually taking pictures, lighting them up to their enemies while they were fighting for their lives. As Alphin came charging forward, the light died out in a dazzled blackness and the bush answered back with a wail; a shuddering cry of defeat and an utter fear of light; the voice of very Africa itself, torn with terror at the rending of her gloom. The patter of arrows ceased abruptly, and all around them those monstrous tangles were filled with a sense of scattering flight.

As the dazzle cleared from his eyes Ward saw Sears and Alphin standing together, with Atta Baidoo at their side. Sphinx-like, immovable save for the glinting shift of his eyeballs, the negro listened as Alphin spoke. Then with a swift obeisance he stooped and touched Sears's feet, and even from a distance there could be seen the suspicion that flitted across Alphin's face as he saw it.

Not until the dawn brought safety did Ward enter the tent to dress. Sears was already there, packing away his film, and he grinned up as the other came in.

"Bully stuff that—some real action in it. I wish I could have got a hundred feet of it."

"You were taking *pictures?*" Ward asked, and Sears looked up again in surprise.

"That is what I'm here for, isn't it?"

A jarring laugh, mostly of relief, came up in Ward, shaking him as he choked it back.

"We owe you thanks all the same," he said. "Your flash powder did more than all our bullets."

"Thank Atta Baidoo, not me," Sears responded. "I had seen what flash powder did to the niggers round Loanda, so when he warned me about these Mquabmas—the Poison Ones, he calls them—why, I just got it ready."

"He warned *you?*"

"Yes; he tried to warn Alphin the first day we saw one—but——"

WITH a shrug that implied all he could not say, Sears went out, leaving Ward to the feeling that somehow the situation had hardly been done justice; but he felt also that any attempt to do so would merely slide off from the other's cool impenetrability.

Three bodies, hideously swollen, to be cast into a hasty hole; then on again, day after day, to-morrow as last week, all sense of time wiped out. There was no more hostility, though; all around them was a silent emptiness, as though a word went ahead that swept the bush of all humanity. At last, when they had almost come to doubt its very existence, came Kayancor and the Arukai, that perverse river which seems to have neither source nor mouth, but sneaks down from untraceable beginnings to a vague end in the mazes of the Südd.

It was at Kayancor that they would stay while the whaleboats were being joined together; from there the Somalis would be sent back, leaving only Atta and a handful of canoe-men to accompany them on the water dash for Zakembwe. A dreary place, an abandoned outpost of the Belgian Congo, its clearing relapsing to forest, its single house foul with great night-birds that squealed from the shutterless windows. One could almost see the blue fingers of fever stealing across the water; and over the whole spot hung a morbid atmosphere as though things unclean and invisible, born of the solitude and trade-lust of the men who had died there, still hung about, craving for human minds on which to batten.

That atmosphere gripped them, all thinned and bleached as they were by those weeks of the bush. Tempers shortened in the fretfulness of fever, and there

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was an uneasy sense of disintegrating discipline. It was with relief that Ward saw the boats completed and loaded for the start.

That night was stagnant with heat under a blighting moon. Their heads were jumping with abnormal temperatures; dinner had been disastrous. Kenney, angered by Alphin's criticisms of his fever treatment, sat in sullen silence. Strobridge, in a sort of irritated perversity, started a discussion on the possible inscriptions of Zakembwe. An argument futile almost to childishness, since it could be settled only by the discovery of things of which none could say, as yet, if they were even there at all; but it had risen almost to acrimony, culminating in Strobridge's outburst:

"When I joined this expedition I understood its object was to discover a truth, and not merely to support the pet theories of Mr. Alphin."

Alphin, in one of those strangely small violences of a nearly great man, had jumped up and left the table. Later on, still shaking with suppressed anger, he approached to where Ward sat alone on the river bank.

"You heard?" he almost accused. "At my own table—I shall call you to witness——"

"Really, sir, I hardly think that Strobridge meant—" Ward began, hastening to soothe, but the other did not permit him to finish.

"Ah—so you are against me, too."

Alphin caught at himself with an effort, looking down at the gliding river with a bitterness that was reflected in the murmur which came from his lips:

"What am I saying—oh, God—the same thing over again—must this expedition also go down to failure?"

Ward thought that he understood; probably that enforced return from Irabamba had begun in some such affair as this. An enthusiasm flamed up in him for this man, one of his boyhood heroes; there should be no Irabamba fiasco if he could do anything to help it.

"Believe me, sir," he stammered eagerly, "I—personally—whole-heartedly with you——"

"I thank you, Ward," said Alphin quietly. "I shall remember this when my book comes to be written."

His book; uncomfortably Ward remembered that somebody had once said something about Alphin's books; of course—Sears—back in Loanda Pequeña.

He followed as Alphin walked away. There were voices behind the sprouting second growth, and Alphin halted by a screen of bananas.

It was Sears, seated on an upturned box, teasing his ukulele to sobs of sentiment. By him was Atta Baidoo, wrapped in his blue cloth, his wrinkled face stamped with all those strange knowledges of Africa that always remained sealed to men of white blood. Crumpling to his haunches, he laid caressing hands on Sears's feet.

"Brinnie Sear', me come for beg you."

"But I have nothing to give you, Atta," Sears replied.

"Me no beg for give," the negro answered, with a flash of pride. "To big man me bring gif'—see."

Cupped in the yellow palms he held out were half a dozen rough nuggets, some fresh-water pearls, like tear-drops of the moon. With a sweep he threw them on the ground before Sears.

"All fo' you, fo' you be big Brinnie and make ju-ju who time them Mquamba be come."

There was silence, punctuated by a few bars of "The Rosary," as Sears looked down at the negro with that considering gaze of his which never seemed to be caught in anything.

"Take your gifts to Mr. Alphin," he nodded at last. "He is the big man of this outfit."

The old negro rose, leaving his treasures on the ground. "Brinnie Sear', me been serve three big white Brinnie, an' me sabe who time me see one. Big Brinnie, he listen, same like you—he got eye same like you—he never make loud mouth, an'—" Atta paused before sweeping triumphantly up to his climax—"if you no be big man, fo' why you never eat chop 'long with other Brinnies, an' all time eat fo' you'self, same like king?"

Ward almost laughed at the unconscious sarcasm of that reversal, but a glance at Alphin's face restrained him. It was livid in the moonlight, the veins in his temples swollen. As he turned abruptly away, Ward hastened after him.

"Chief — Sears doesn't mean anything——"

"Sears!" Alphin echoed contemptuously. "He is just a young fool; but Atta Baidoo—what ignorance—to think that he was with such men as Lorton and Welles and can not see that I—I——"

He stopped, almost in fear, it would have seemed; his face breaking as that of one in a torment of strange inner fires, and appalled by the memory of what that pain had driven him to before. There came a muttering that was half a prayer:

"God—am I going that way again—shall I never conquer?"

He turned to Ward, who stood aching to aid in something that he could not understand, and with a feeling of almost indecency too, as though he were seeing the man morally naked.

"Leave me alone now," Alphin said. "And whatever comes, remember this—that I know, and that I strive. Heavens—can't you see that I am striving now?"

The veins stood out again on his temples, purple knots of the anger he was trying to repress. It shook his voice as he went on:

"But it is *they* who will not see what I am. I have been suspicious of Atta

Dwarfish, yellowish, armed with a futile-looking little bow and arrow, it squatted.

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It was Sears teasing his ukulele to sobs of sentiment. By him was Atta Baidoo.

Baidoo ever since that night of the attack—I will take no chances of any further disloyalty—this settles it."

What it settled Ward could not imagine, as he took himself wearily to his tent, thankful that the morrow would be the last day in Kayancor, eager to be off on the river journey. Looking out he saw Alphin striding uneasily up and down the trampled bank, strangely alone against that background of uttermost Africa, a man evidently wrestling with himself. Later on he thought he heard sounds of dispute, but fatigue claimed him and he sank to sleep.

Before dawn he awoke with an uneasy sense of a presence; there was some one in the tent, a dark figure bending silently over Sears's cot. As it moved back into the shaft of moonlight through the opened flaps, Ward saw that it was Atta Baidoo, stripped and oiled for travel, his blue mantle wrapped round a bundle. With a sign for silence the negro squatted by Ward's side.

"Me been bring gif' fo' him," he whispered. "No wake him. He no take befo', but now who time he wake, me be gone."

"You are going?" Ward breathed, and the negro nodded with meaning.

"Brinnie Alphin, he too angry fo' me. He make loud talk, say he going send me back fo' coast 'long them Somali boy'. Me be headman, me no sabe take shame befo' them boy', so me go now."

Silently as a shadow he slipped from the tent, the only sign of his having been there the little canvas bag he had laid in Sears's unconscious hand. Wonderingly Ward watched him as he crossed the moon-splashed clearing, pushed aside a mass of hanging creepers as though it had been a curtain, and was immediately lost behind the veil of the bush. Eight hundred miles to the coast, and he would make it naked and alone, passing by ways impossible to trace.

So Alphin had evidently lost in that silent struggle on the river bank—a struggle against something in himself; but whatever it might have been he had not won the fight. Ward sat up in sudden recollection that it was upon Atta Baidoo they had been counting as guide through the mazes of the Südd.

And Atta Baidoo was gone beyond hope of recall, for once that curtain of creepers had hidden him from sight there was no possibility of finding that solitary figure, slipping swiftly through the bush on paths known only to himself. Across Ward's mind flitted a doubt. It had come before, several times, but each time he had cast it off as he would some unclean thing crawling on his skin.

What had Alphin done? Before Ward's eyes he stood out again, livid with inner storm, a figure of queer tragedy under that savage moon.

A strange man, but he was the leader, and above and through all things he must be loyally supported.

III

THREE weeks had been allotted for the passage of the Südd, but on the twentieth day it still stretched about them, and all their scouting from the tops of trees could discover no shores.

On the maps its half-guessed limits are vaguely indicated as perhaps two hundred miles at the narrowest, its length unknown. A vast stretch of cane-brake and papyrus, its channels clogged with floating water plants that must be cut piecemeal away to permit the passage of any craft. Here and there an island, as often as not submerged, its matted jungle rising cliff-like from the waters. Vainly attempting to steer a general course by compass, they went nosing down channel after channel, twisting and turning, as often as not to find it but a blind alley from which they must back out. Each channel exactly like the last; walls of rank cane, overarching papyrus, and the floating carpet of green water plants being hauled away from the bow.

A mass of baggage cramping their knees, the dip and rise of the bare black backs of the canoe-men, the sound of their chant ringing hollowly down the endless water aisles. As often as not wading knee deep to help haul the boats across some shallow stretch, their feet sinking in slime, no wetter than were their bared chests from the streaming sweat. With all breeze shut out by the high cane a terrible stillness lay over the swamp, broken only by the lip-lap of the water among the stalks; and even that ceased as the sun climbed to the top of the sky, hanging nailed there for hours, a blazing and relentless eye from which there was no escape.

So it went, blistered and dazzled by the dancing reflections by day, chilled through by the dews at night, until Ward felt that his former life was only a dream, and that in reality he had been eternally worming his way through this amphibious, coal-age, sort of world. They might have been the first men on some planet still raw from the kick of chaos.

When possible they made an island for the night camps; when there was none within reach without hours of paddling there came the added wretchedness of a night in the boats, with all the squalid intimacies of such cramped quarters. Ward came to dread the approach of those nights, shutting down like purple lids against which the swamp sent up a cloud of stinging insects. There were times when in those fancies born of sheer exhaustion he almost suspected an actual design in the constant bafflements of the place. The most utterly savage spot in all Africa, he could imagine it holding grimly out against the inroads of civilization. Yet there was evidently life of some kind in the Südd. More than once

(*Continued on page 118*)

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The Colyumists' Confessional

II. Christopher Morley, *by Himself*

I CAN not imagine any pleasant job so full of pangs, or any painful job so full of pleasures, as the task of conducting a newspaper column.

The colyumist, when he begins his job, is disheartened because nobody notices it. He soon outgrows this, and is disheartened because too many people notice it, and he imagines that all see the paltriness of it as plainly as he does. There is nothing so amazing to him as to find that any one really enjoys his "stuff." Poor soul, he remembers how he groaned over it at his desk. He remembers the hours he sat with lack-luster eye and addled brain, brooding at the sluttish typewriter. He remembers the flush of shame that tingled him as he walked sadly homeward, thinking of some atrocious inanity he had sent upstairs to the composing-room. It is a job that engenders a healthy humility.

I had always wanted to have a try at writing a column. Heaven help me, I think I had an idea that I was born for the job. I may as well be candid. There was a time, about two years ago, when I seriously thought of inserting the following ad in a Philadelphia newspaper. I find a memorandum of it in my scrap-book:

HUMORIST

Young and untamed, lineal descendant of Eugene Field, Frank Stockton and Francois Rabelais, desires to run a column in a Philadelphia newspaper. A guaranteed circulation-getter.

Said Humorist can also supply excellent veins of philosophy, poetry, satire, uplift, glad material, and indiscriminate musings. Remarkable opportunity for any newspaper desiring a really unusual editorial feature. Address HUMORIST, etc.

So besotted was I, I would have paid to have this printed if I had not been counseled by an older and wiser head.

I instance this to show that the colyumist is likely to begin his job with the conception that it is to be a perpetual uproar of mirth and high spirits. This lasts about a week. He then learns, in secret, to take it rather seriously. He has to deal with the most elusive and grotesque material he knows—his own mind; and the unhappy creature, everlastingly probing himself in the hope of discovering what is so rare in minds (a thought), is likely to end in a ferment of bitterness. The happiest times in life are when one can just live along and enjoy things as they happen. If you have to be endlessly speculating, watching, and making mental notes, your brain-gears soon get a hot box. The original of all paragraphers—Ecclesiastes—came very near ending as a complete cynic; though in what F. P. A. would call his "lastline," he managed to wriggle into a more hopeful mood.

"Socrates," of the Philadelphia "Evening Public Ledger" Colyum

THE CHAFFING-DISH

The first valuable discovery that the colyumist is likely to make is that all minds are very much the same. The doctors tell us that all patent medicines are built on a stock formula—a sedative, a purge and a bitter. If you are to make steady column-toppers out of your readers, your daily dose must, as far as possible, average up to that same prescription. If you employ the purge all the time, or the sedative, or the acid, your clients will soon ask for something with another label.

Don Marquis once wrote an admirable little poem called "A Colyumist's Prayer." Mr. Marquis, who is the king of all colyumists, realizes that there is what one may call a religious side in colyumizing. It is hard to get the colyumist to admit this, for he fears spoofing worse than the devil; but it is eminently true. If I were the owner of a newspaper, I think I would have painted up on the wall of the local room the following words from Isaiah, the best of all watchwords for all who write:

> Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

The most painful privilege of the colyumist's job is the number of people who drop in to see him, usually when he is imprecating his way toward the hour of going to press. This is all a part of the great and salutary human instinct against work. When people see a man toiling, they have an irresistible impulse to crowd round and stop him. They seem to imagine that he has been put there on purpose to help them solve their problems, to find a job for their friend from Harrisburg, or to tell them how to find a publisher for their poems. Unhappily, their victim, being merely human, is likely to grow a bit snappish under infliction. Yet now and then he gets a glimpse into a human vexation so sincere, so honest, and so moving that he turns away from the typewriter with a sigh. He wonders how one dare approach the chronicling of this muddled panorama with anything but humility and despair. Frank Harris once said of Oscar Wilde: "If England insists on treating her criminals like this, she doesn't deserve to have any." Similarly, if the public insists on bringing its woes to its colyumists, it doesn't deserve to have any colyumists. Then the battered jester turns again to his machine and ticks off something like this:

We have heard of ladies who have been tempted beyond their strength. We have also seen some who have been strengthened beyond their temptation.

OF COURSE there are good days too. (This is not one of them.) Days when the whole course of the news seems planned for the benefit of the chaffish and irreverent commentator. When Governor Hobby of Texas issues a call for the state cavalry. When one of your clients drops in, in the goodness of his heart, to give you his own definition of a pessimist—

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—a pessimist, he says, is a man who wears both belt and suspenders. When a big jewelry firm in the city puts out a large ad—

Bailey, Banks & Biddle Company
Watches for Women
Of Superior Design and Perfection
of Movement

all that one needs to do to that is to write over it the caption

SO DO WE ALL

and pass on to the next paragraph.

The more a colyumist is out on the streets, making himself the reporter of the moods and oddities of men, the better his stuff will be. It seems to me that his job ought to be good training for a novelist, as it teaches him a habit of human sensitiveness. He becomes filled with an extraordinary curiosity about the motives and purposes of the people he sees. The other afternoon I was very much struck by the unconscious pathos of a little, gentle-eyed, old man who was standing on Chestnut Street studying a pocket note-book. His umbrella leaned against a shop-window, on the sill of which he had laid a carefully rolled-up newspaper. By his feet was a neat leather brief-case, plumply filled with contents not discernible. There he stood, very diminutive, his gray hair rather long abaft his neck, his yellowish straw hat (with curly brim) tilted backward as though in perplexity, his timid and absorbed blue eyes poring over his memorandum-book, which was full of penciled notes. He had a slightly unkempt, brief beard and whiskers, his cheek-bones pinkish, his linen a little frayed. There was something strangely pathetic about him, and I would have given much to have been able to speak to him. I halted at a window farther down the street and studied him; then returned to pass him again, and watched him patiently. He stood quite absorbed, and was still there when I went on.

THAT is just one of the thousands of vivid little pictures one sees on the city streets day by day. To catch some hint of the meaning of all this, to present a few scrawled notes of the amazing interest and color of the city's life, this is the colyumist's task as I see it. It is a task not a whit less worthy, less painful, or less baffling than that of the most conscientious novelist. And it is carried on in surroundings of extraordinary stimulation and difficulty. It is heart-racking to struggle day by day, amid incessant interruption and mêlée, to snatch out of the hurly-burly some shreds of humor or pathos or (dare one say?) beauty, and phrase them intelligibly.

But it is fun. One never buys a package of tobacco, crosses a city square, enters a trolley-car or studies a shop-window without trying, in a baffled, hopeless way, to peer through the frontage of the experiences, to find some glimmer of the thoughts, emotions and meanings behind. And in the long run such a habit of inquiry must bear fruit in understanding and sympathy. Joseph Conrad (who seems, by the way, to be more read by newspaper-men than any other writer) put very nobly the pinnacle of all scribblers' dreams when he said that human affairs deserve the tribute of "a sigh which is not a sob, a smile which is not a grin."

So much, with apology, for the ideals of the colyumist, if he be permitted to speak truth without fear of mockery. Of course in the actual process and travail of his job you will find him far different. You may know him by a sunken, brooding eye; clothing marred by much tobacco, and a chafed and tetchy humor toward the hour of five P.M. Having bitterly schooled himself to see men as paragraphs walking, he finds that his most august musings have a habit of stewing themselves down to some ferocious or jocular three-line comment. He may yearn desperately to compose a really thrilling poem that will speak his passionate soul; to churn up from the typewriter some lyric that will rock with blue seas and frantic hearts; he finds himself allaying the frenzy with some jovial sneer at Henry Ford or a yell about the High Cost of Living. Poor soul, he is like one condemned to harangue the vast idiotic world through a keyhole, whence his anguish issues thin and faint. Yet who will say that all his labor is wholly vain? Perhaps some day the government will crown a Colyumist Laureate, some majestic sage with ancient patient blue eyes and a snowy beard nobly stained with nicotine, whose utterances will be heeded with shuddering respect. All minor colyumists will wear robes and sandals; they will be an order of scoffing friars; people will run to them on crowded streets to lay before them the sorrows and absurdities of men. And in that day

The meanest paragraph that blows will give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for sneers.

We asked Mr. Morley to pick out a sample of his best work for the year. These "Synthetic Poems" are among those he says he likes the best:

FORCE OF HABIT

Why is it
That the paying teller
Even before he sees my check
Always says
"Will you have it in ones?"

UNANIMOUS

If the Kaiser
Were electrocuted
All the world would sing:
Ohm, sweet ohm.

LACK OF BALANCE

The Prune Exchange Bank
Refused my account
Because I tried to deposit
A dew-spangled cobweb
And a post-dated sunset.

WHAT INDEED?

A brown-eyed girl
Once said to me
"What's the Big Idea?"
And to tell you the truth,
I hardly know.

SUSPICION

When I am writing poetry
I often feel
That I am about to be
Interrupted
By a flash of prose.

PESSIMISM

I always ask
At least three trainmen
If this is the right train for where I am going.
Even then
I hardly believe them.

QUERY

Who can alleviate
The joy of a social worker
Alleviating
The sorrows of the poor?

THE POWER-HOUSE

Every day I go past
The Library on Ludlow Street.
I look in the open windows
And see the great dynamos.
They have power enough to jazz the earth
And throw the planets out of step,
But they make no sound.
I saw a girl with shell goggles
Dusting some of them,
Unterrified by her proximity
To such dangerous engines.
Look out, child, *look out!*
Don't get too near the Bernard Shaw rheostat
Or the Walt Whitman fly-wheel!

FURLOUGH

It's all right for a man
To be absent-minded,
But his mind shouldn't overstay
Its leave of absence.

MISDIRECTED ZEAL

When I am at work in the office
A kind of palsy seizes on my soul.
I feel the whole weight of the universe
Crushing down on my defenseless spirit;
But when I get home at night,
And it is time to go to bed,
I am as brisk as a ticket-seller
In the box-office of a vaudeville show.
In the sheer lustihood of my exuberance,
I rearrange all the bottles in the medicine closet,
And with the zeal of Russell Conwell,
Delivering "Acres of Diamonds" for the 5000th time,
I have been known to pursue a cockroach
From one end of the apartment to the other.

STENOGRAPHY

I've been taking dictation
From the universe
For quite a while.
I've got a bunch of notes;
Now it's time to transcribe them.
Queer—
I can't seem
To make sense out of them.

DEPARTMENT-STORE

Don't judge my mind
By what you see in the show-window.
That is only the stuff
For which I have to get a quick turnover.
Inside there is much that is pleasant and quaint.
The floor-walker won't bother you.

In the March number Ted Robinson, the Cleveland *Plain Dealer's* "Philosopher of Folly," will appear at the Confessional

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In walked Major Gilbert Cadwallader Soar, Disch., and applied for a job writing advertisements.

She and He

By Harold Cary

SHE was within the draft age—that is, between twenty-one and thirty-one; so picture her feelings when the big doings started.

Suppose you had had to stay home from the great adventure of war because of some—ah—mental or ethical or physical disability. You know—something like not any eyelashes, or a baseball finger.

Would you have made bandages or monkeyed with war-savings stamps or something like that? Unh, unh!

You probably would have driven an ambulance or been a ship riveter. That's how it was with Elsbeth Ann, and that's how she made her start—because she was barred from the army along with the convicts, inmates of insane asylums and physically unfit.

You shan't be bothered any more about wars, however, because now you will remember that Elsbeth Ann was no kitty-kitty name, that the girl who answers to it got her start because she wanted to do something real and purposeful, that she did it, that it came out well for the war and for Elsbeth Ann too, that now every one knows her (favorably, too), that Mr. Dun and Mr. Bradstreet have a lot of A's and 1's after Elsbeth Ann's name, and that on the ground-glass pane of her office door it says:

ELSBETH ANN TIMBER
PRIVATE

in spite of the fact that she is somewhat of a captain of industry.

After she had handled the publicity for about forty thousand war activites (more or less, good and bad, I guess) and put them all over big, she had to do something—and oh, how she did it, and still does it, too!

In Caslon Old Style type, very plain, readable, her letter-head says something like this: Advertising Counsel.

Of course that doesn't mean much. We all give advertising counsel whenever we get the chance, but that was the way she named her advertising agency, just "Elsbeth Ann Timber, Inc."

And then, months after the armistice was signed, when business was booming and profits were rolling in for Elsbeth Ann Timber, Inc., in walked Major Gilbert Cadwallader Soar, Disch., head up, shoulders back, puttees shining, eyes piercing, and applied for a job writing advertisements.

Even were all other advertising offices in New York City closed, the Major should not have applied for a "copy" job where he did. The major knew Ann and Ann knew the major—as Gib. Back in sleigh-ride days they had probably held hands. And since it is a business axiom that you can not employ fathers, brothers, cousins, or friends to work for you, it seems very trite that there was no place for Gib Soar in that organization.

Having applied for a job for reasons best known to himself, he got it at a rather exorbitant figure. Perhaps it was because even majors must return to mufti, and there was a while back when we weren't doing everything in our power to help them. It is said that even bachelors felt the high cost of going back to a job.

Elsbeth Ann Timber gave him a shiny new desk in the office two doors down the hall, bought a vacuum carafe with its tray of the same colored enamel, put a soft rug under his feet and an electric push-button under his thumb. She must have had high hopes indeed for Major Gilbert Cadwallader Soar.

There was plenty for him to do. What with White Ripple Soap (there's a bar in your bath right now), Rose Bread and the whole line of Comestible Fruits and a lot of small things besides, Ann Timber, Inc., could support a man like the major with ease. That is, if he worked as he should.

Gilbert Soar sat down with a sigh at the desk which he had acquired. Pretty soft. Ann right down the hall, too. He liked that. He would have to work hard now, though—he wondered what it would be like working for a woman, and for Ann Timber. She didn't look much like a business woman. He never dreamed that a girl such as he knew Ann was could have built this business. The facts belied him, though. She was as much a girl as she ever had been. He liked that cool summer dress that she was wearing to-day. It was—it was—blue foulard, blue anyway, with white circles on it, and it had a net-like drape over it, a Georgette tunic, he thought triumphantly. He knew a lot about women's clothes.

He wondered if she would be at the dance to-night. There was one at the club—they both lived in Bayside. He reached for the telephone. He thought better of it. Does one ask one's boss if she is going to the dance to-night?

The telephone rang and relieved him, his question unanswered.

"Rags!" he exclaimed, when he heard the voice on the wire. "Old girl, I'm bored to tears at the moment," he admitted. "But are you dancing to-night?" he asked. "What time shall I call for you? Oh, you will? Corking!" He sighed with relief.

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Rags lived in Roslyn, seven dollars by motor from Bayside. He'd like her limousine, too. That's the only comfortable way to go to a dance. He'd wear his uniform for the last time. Rags would expect it.

He pressed the button on the desk experimentally. In the course of an aeon or two, after he had tapped reveille seven times on the desk, the office-girl appeared.

"Some water, ice-water," requested the major frowning.

The little girl nodded briskly and started out.

"Wait," he called. It was an inspiration. Lord, how army life gets you! He had forgotten to put his house in order—get out the tools and pretend to work.

"Bring me the last three portfolios of White Ripple Soap advertisements." He nodded sourly as the door swung to behind her. He clouded his brow for the day.

Rags called for him out in Bayside at nine. She was in form to-night. He knew he could have kissed her as he hopped into her car, but he wasn't quite up to that. She was lovely, too, and insisted on holding his hand as they spun down the grade to the Yacht Club turn. The thought made him shiver undecisively.

"It's grand and glorious and good and beautiful to have you back, Gib," she said. "Wasn't the army awful?"

"Not as bad as that," he laughed, "but it's just as good to be with you again. You won't talk about work, will you?"

"WORK? Just rather not. I can't understand why you do it," she said.

"I didn't to-day. It may take me a while to get my nose under its heel," he said.

"Why not cut it for good, Gib? You're too good a man to work. Marry some nice girl with oodles of cash. Settle down to a life of ease." She wasn't perfectly serious as she said it. What was it some word-monger once said: "Half in jest, half in earnest?"

"That's pretty hard to do," he returned. "Especially when you think you could make yourself rich on a turn of the market, with any luck."

"Hum," she said. "Dad says it takes capital to make money."

"Well?" He meant that he did have a little capital saved.

"Oh!" She understood.

His word hadn't meant very much. His stake to windward was hardly the price of a year's clothes for her, he knew, but it was that little sum which he had meant.

He took her into the club and played at making violent love to her and enjoyed a whale of an evening. It was good to be back. Every one was so decent about it. You felt that they liked you. He missed Ann. He wished she would come. Yet dancing with Rags, seeing her red head just under his chin, hearing her sparkle, saying howdy to friends, made him forget Elsbeth Ann.

She did come finally, along toward the tag end of the evening. She looked tired too, as though she might have worked late at the office. It gave him a guilty feeling. He might have been able to help her, instead of racing off at four-thirty.

Still, she was energetic—not with Rags's sort of pep, but with that slender endurance that is graceful—in a man it is called wiry. He stopped to watch as she sailed off on her father's arm and was lost in the dance. He noticed where she stopped, too, because he knew there were at least four men at the Club who would have liked to have all her remaining dances.

He was able to get one. He had to neglect Rags the while most shamefully.

"Like old times, Ann," he said in a low voice as they swept off dancing as one. "We always had the knack together."

"Yes, we did. Are you glad to be back?"

"Yes, I think so, and going to be more so. If you aren't too hard on me, that is." She laughed. "Oh, it's keen up at our place. Most fun in the world. I could hardly tear myself loose to-night. Came out on the 10:22."

He shuddered. It sounded as though she might make a hard taskmaster. He tried not to think of the office.

The music carried them on. How she could dance! He knew that she must be enjoying it too, tired as she was. The faint perfume of her soft dark hair carried him back to days when she had been just a girl. He supposed he had loved her then. She meant even more to him now than he admitted. It was Rags who had torn him away, and brought him into another set of social affairs while Ann had been going on at Barnard.

"Who did you bring to-night?" she asked.

"Rags."

"Oh!" She smiled up at him. He winced just a little inside.

"What's she thinking about now?" the girl went on. "Matrimony or yachts?" Animus? No, he couldn't accuse Elsbeth Ann Timber of that. She hadn't any reason to, but her words bit just the least.

The music stopped and he left her to one of the four who had clamored for those which were left. He felt worsted somehow. It had some connection with the office. He could almost have imagined that Ann had heard Rags's words. "Why work?"

Well, he *would* work. He'd know Elsbeth Ann better, too, and make her respect him. He could do it, he knew. When the moment came he would be able to make his old typewritter sing as it had in '17 when Gilbert Cadwallader Soar hadn't been at all a mean sort of an advertising man. He'd like to do all he could for Ann.

IT WASN'T so easy. He wasn't used to sitting still at a desk for seven hours a day. He felt like a released schoolboy when he ran out to see a client. He sat too much at his desk—dreaming and shouting "Halt!" as he had in his drillmaster days way back of the lines. Not that he really shouted it, but he just held himself back in time more than once. He worked by fits and starts. And he tried, yes, he tried.

Elsbeth Ann Timber needed him. She was up to her ears in a new account. It was unfortunate, too, that the Shadewell Dye Corporation was in Boston. They kept Ann traveling in the night sleeper to New England twice a week while she helped them. There is so much to do in launching new products, and so much of it is a new kind of work. She wished she could turn more of it over to Gilbert.

He seemed to be more temperamental than she ever dreamed a man could be at such a sober business as advertising. Every now and then he turned out a brilliant piece of copy, but she hardly dared count on him. She had to admit that the old dear was helping to make the concern well known for its work. But those dreaming fits—they were awful. He was like the stories you read about men who are in love. Yet she hardly believed that he was really in love with that thoughtless little red-headed Rags.

She didn't like, either, the way he gave orders to the clerks and the office-girl. They complained to her about it, and she explained that it was because of his army training. Finally she explained their objections to him and he growled like an angry puppy. That wouldn't do. Why couldn't he be the nice old Gib who used to play around with her?

Still, in the Shadewell matter, the first piece of copy—a sample effort which was to show them how she meant their copy to be handled—Gib fulfilled every promise. Of course you are familiar with the advertising which has been done for the little dyes on the market—some of them in flake form, some of them in cake form. They are said to be quite wonderful, but no copy-writer had then ever thought to tackle the problem from an actually esthetic point of view. That's the way Gib went after them.

He wrote exotically, and then had the stuff set up in italics instead of in Roman type. He had the most bizarre layout produced that artist ever nightmared. He tackled those little cakes of dye as though they were magicians' lodestones, with the power to make any woman who used them as entrancing as the purple nights of the Bedouins, as colorful as the most skilled dance of an Arabian day-dream, as desirable as the Sleeping Beauty.

Hold that first layout in your hand and read the copy out loud—"the flaming orange and purples of a sunset will rise and mingle like the colored streamers of a boiling love philter, those faint far blues at the end of the spectrum will dance before your eyes, until you see wild draperies wrapped in delicious confusion about your own most cherished desire."

Seriously, the man must have been in love. No normal human being could write that way. The Shadewell people wanted to meet him. They said that the author of those lines ought to live in Boston, but Elsbeth Ann wisely kept him at home, told him briefly that the stuff "went over big" and he had certainly cut out a job for himself to repeat on the rest of the advertisements.

"Can you do it over again—do twelve pieces like that?" she asked.

"I haven't the slightest idea," he growled, "never did it before, may never do it again."

He didn't. Whether he fell out of love, or whether his first performance had been sheer luck, Ann couldn't tell. But his next job was as prosaic as a plumbing ad. The closing dates were bearing down on them, and since the Shadewell people had purchased through Ann many color pages, non-cancelable, at a huge cost, gradually gloom spread around the offices like poison-ivy over a Connecticut fence.

ANN took Gib out to lunch, and refused to let him buy even his own package of cigarets and his extra glass of iced coffee—she paid the whole bill quite regally and distinctly, as she played the part of his particular queen or boss. She talked to him in a "serious way." She tried to show him what this meant to the incorporate

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"Don't 'Ann' me, Gilbert Soar! You come back to the office right now. I've got a cab up on the ramp waiting."

entity of Elsbeth Ann Timber, and in a slight way to himself, but she received in exchange hardly more than a stack of grunts.

"Are you just trying to be horrid to me—me in particular, Gib?" she besought him at the end, while she waited for the waiter to bring her scarf.

"Hardly!" he said, non-comittally, when he should have been frank and made some sort of an excuse.

They went along back to the office, she to hers and he to his thick carpet and vacuum carafe. She resolved she would pay no attention to him—she couldn't discipline him, and she had as much to do as would keep busy half a dozen débutantes and their maids—in this case, stenographers. By four o'clock she wanted to ask him a question about Fruit Comestibles that she felt needed male judgment, so she sent for him.

He wasn't in. He'd gone off muttering about golf and taking a day or two off.

Now if you're in sympathy with that and think perhaps that is just what he should have done, have another guess. The man who writes advertising copy can usually do better work when he is tired and disgruntled and watches his outline than he ever can when he is fresh and sweet as a daisy, and everybody in the game knows it just as well as such facts can be known.

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"Boston had the White Sox 6 to 1 in the sixth," he said smiling.

It's best to keep your nose under the heel of it and suffer. Lovely stuff comes that way. Ann had been in the business long enough to know it, too. At this latest move of his she was rapidly becoming that irate boss of fancy, who stands up and tells the whole force to get out, *"Get Out!* Get your checks from the cashier!"

She came down to the office the next morning with just one thought in mind—to can that man tighter than a tin of bully beef. She spent half the night thinking about him and—yes—well, about Rags, the red-headed little ne'er-do-well. Rags must be back of this, and if she was, nothing remained but to give him the shock of his life.

She was disgusted with men in business. They are an evil, necessary perhaps, but an evil. They're so darn flighty, you can't depend on 'em. Why couldn't Gib Soar be just as steady and capable a sort of person as Miss Perkins, who kept the books? She was never late in the morning. She always stayed late at night. She always dressed neatly, she never broke her eyeglasses and had to go home for others.

You have to handle men like—like lace. You can stretch them or pull them about, make them give you certain clever effects, but you must be careful not to get them mussed and you have to keep them away from the fire so they won't go up—*pouf!* And they stay out late at night and go to dances and fall in love so that you never know what to expect of them when closing dates for ads begin to bear down on you.

It was time she was going in to tell Gilbert Soar that he ought to look for another job. Perhaps there were places in New York, places not so businesslike, places which, considering advertising more a matter of geniuslike flashes than a hard business proposition, would welcome the antics of such a man. But here the temperamental stuff didn't go. She walked into his office.

"Mr. Soar," she began, "u-hum, u-hum." Her voice didn't function very well.

"Can it, Ann. My name is Gib."

How can your fire a man who treats you like that? She knew she had no business to call him Mr. Soar, but how could she fire Gib? It isn't done, you know. That's the old matter of relations or friends working for you. It's impossible. Utterly. So Ann found out very soon.

But why couldn't he at least make some excuses? When you came right down to it, there was still a lot of time. If necessary she could get a fairly good job done outside—hire it done. It would reduce her profit on the campaign, but it would save a lot of trouble.

So instead of firing Gib Soar she blushed again. Gib looked uncomfortable. It was as though he wanted to say something and didn't know how to phrase it, and since he said nothing she had to say something.

"Well, I can't help being worried, Gib, about Shadewell. You know if we lost that account because we couldn't do as well with the rest as with the first page, it would be more than a mere financial loss—it would be a blow at prestige, and we are getting along so well now!"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Oh, a little, maybe; but after all there are 640,000 manufacturing concerns in this country according to the last census," he said dreamily.

Was this sabotage? She stamped her foot and walked out of his office. If she could keep back the tears until she got inside her own door—and then she smiled. He'd get over it. It was—it must be—that girl. She shut her teeth hard.

She kept her decision not to bother him any more for a day or two. He must have a conscience. Gib Soar had always had one. Why, she remembered—but she stamped her foot again. She would not remember, she did not want to remember, she would not allow herself to.

Ann was thinking about him then, as the door of her office opened silently. For a moment Gib Soar stood hesitantly in the doorway and then he walked in. He was smiling, for the first time in weeks, she thought. He must have finished the Shadewell copy. Her mind leapt to that instantly. It was so constantly in the background of her mind, transcending all her little worries about office detail. The idea that he would not come to her until that job was complete persisted, because she so hoped that it was done. She smiled with relief. Certainly Gib Soar was a real worker when he was going right.

"Not busy, Ann?" he asked.

She shook her head. She could not help but say then, "The Shadewell copy is really ready at last?"

"No," he said cheerily, as though Shadewell was far from his thoughts, "I haven't produced that yet." He couldn't have been watching her face. If he had noticed it carefully he would never have gone on with his present errand. He pulled a folded sheet out of his pocket, smoothed it, and placed it on her desk.

"This letter came to me in the usual routine because there are some copy essentials in it." He waited while she glanced through it. She had passed the letter on to him originally.

She knew that it contained nothing of inportance. It irritated her profoundly that he was bringing it back to her. That fact showed that he was not putting all his thought on the copy which was late. There was no reason whatsoever that he should concern himself with her business relations with the Shadewell Corporation.

He looked at her, "Ann, you shouldn't

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Photo by Capt. Edward N. Jackson, U. S. A.

In the center is W. H. Moran, Chief of the Secret Service of the United States; on his right is Arnold Landvoigt, star of German-spy catchers, and on his left is Richard Jervis, recently promoted to the head of the White House detail.

The President's Body-Guard

By William G. Shepherd

A SQUARE-JAWED American man with iron-gray hair stood on the sidewalk in front of the Hotel Crillon in Paris looking idly out onto the Place de la Concorde. To all intents and purposes he was only one of the gentle loafers who infested the Peace Conference headquarters.

I knew him for better than that, though.

Not many days before, an American doughboy, who had picked up a smattering of French and who had dropped a very lucrative pursuit known as the "confidence game" back in the United States in order to come over to France and fight, had "sold" the Paris subway to a French farmer for fifteen thousand dollars. The American military police had caught him, and had secured the return of most of the money. Secretly we Americans had all been rather proud of our countryman and his astonishing efficiency.

This iron-gray-haired man had taken an interest in the capture. Wherefore, knowing him to be prone to persiflage, I came up behind him quietly as he gazed out into the great square, and said to him softly, pointing to the gigantic slender Egyptian obelisk which Napoleon brought from Africa to set up in the heart of his own home town: "Hello, mister! I know a fellow who'll sell you that 'Cleopatra's Needle,' if you want it."

He turned toward me with a straight face, and was about to speak.

A sharp, short hiss came from the Crillon doorway behind us. Instantly he turned, raised his hand to summon a huge black automobile that stood in the square, and then walked toward a sizeable group of civilians that stood expectantly on the sidewalk. They moved back at his command. He raised his finger to a giant French policeman, who came at his beck and placed himself before the civilians. There was a flurry at the hotel door. My square-jawed friend was all alert. To me he seemed to be standing on his tiptoes in an intensity of nervous and muscular preparation for whatever bodily motion might be required of him.

Out through the doorway came the President of the United States. Behind him came a number of other square-jawed American men. They were the President's body-guard. As they passed us, my square-jawed friend spoke to them, shortly and sharply, giving orders.

"All right, Chief," said one of them.

Wilson got into the big black car and was whirled away. The Secret Service men got into another and followed.

Then my square-jawed friend, who at the moment was joined by several others, turned to me and said, in stage-farmer dialect: "I dunno, bud. Mebbe I would buy that thing. I got a durned good purpose fer it."

"What would you do with it?" I asked.

"I'd plug up that consarned new-fangled Hudson tube with it," he added, "to keep you New York City slickers to home. That's what I'd do, by gum!"

There spoke W. H. Moran, chief of the Secret Service of the United States.

Our little persiflage had been interrupted, it is true, by the momentary passing of Grim Duty, but Chief Moran is not a man to let a chance to smile go by.

In peace times Moran sits at his desk in the Treasury Department in Washington and, through scores of his agents in every part of the United States, makes war on counterfeiters. And also through his window that looks across into the White House grounds, he can see where his men are keeping guard over the person and welfare of the President of the United States. To fight counterfeiters and protect the President are his only duties.

Few of the correspondents and newspaper men of the United States would ever have come into personal contact with Chief Moran unless it had been thought necessary for him to go to Paris with President Wilson and superintend, personally, the task of guarding the President. At home, Moran is an office-bound executive but there in Paris a few of us became very well acquainted with him and with some of his expert "guards." As for myself, I saw no more interesting men in that great conference than those dozen or more Secret Service men. There were hundreds of dull hours at the Crillon when everybody was waiting around for something to happen; and during those dull hours you became acquainted with everybody who lounged in the Crillon hallways. Thus I came to know something of the men who are the stars in the American Secret Service Department. I found them intensely interesting and hopelessly clever. They are men who seem to be able to do everything or anything.

Secret Service and Song

ONE day, for example, while the *George Washington* was in mid-ocean bound toward Europe, President Wilson heard singing on an upper deck. He was writing on his typewriter at the time, but he has a nice ear for music, if it be not too classic, so he was lured away from his machine onto the deck.

"Who's doing all this good singing?" he asked of Dr. Grayson.

"Oh, the Secret Service men," said Grayson.

"Well, that's as good a quartet as I ever heard," said Wilson.

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The gentleman in a straw hat in this view of a certain presidential ceremony in France is Joseph Murphy, at that time chief of the presidential body-guard, and since promoted to the assistant chieftainship of the Treasury Department's Secret Service.

I am able to give the personnel of that quartet: Chief Moran was singing bass; this is no uncommon thing for him, for he sings every Sunday in the choir of a Presbyterian church in Washington, where he also serves as deacon. Edward Starling was singing barytone. Millions of Americans were to see Starling later, on President Wilson's swing around the country. He was the tall fellow who always stood on the running-board of the President's car. Arnold Landvoigt, one of the star German-spy catchers, was singing second tenor, and Eddie Jackson, the Army photographer who was detailed to cover the trip, was singing tenor.

Versatile Fly-Cops

MANY times after that, Wilson was to hear this quartet sing. In the church at Carlisle, England, where he went to worship at the altar of his ancestors, a fine, guiding strain of harmony rang out above all the other voices during the singing of the hymns. It was a strain new to the Carlisle worshipers, and the harmony came from the Secret Service quartet.

To be able to be all things to all men, this is the first and chief requirement of a Secret Service man. And at close range, you see these Secret Service men of the Treasury Department being so many different things to so many different people, that you wonder at their various abilities.

Out of the thousands of Treasury Department "operatives" in the United States, some of the very best are picked for duty in Washington, and some of the very best are selected to protect the President.

The old-timer of the White House body-guard is Joseph E. Murphy. It was Murphy who had first-hand control, under Chief Moran, of the presidential body-guard in Europe, and his work there was so well done that, when he returned to Washington, he was promoted to the place of assistant to Chief Moran.

President Wilson's body-guards each receive five dollars a day. They can't very well strike. But the body-guard men all say that "Eagle-Eye Joe" Murphy, who knows American and foreign crowds like a book, who can pick out a "crank" like a magnet finding steel, and who loves the big road and the tumult and excitement of great throngs, would be happier back in the "guard," in spite of the stingy day wages, than in the big office of the Treasury Building.

If President Roosevelt or President Taft or President Wilson ever came to your town, Murphy was with him. He was the Secret Service man with the round face and the tightly closed lips who always made it a point to stand some two feet higher than the President, whenever the President was at a standstill. He would climb onto a box or a carriage step or an automobile running-board or stair steps or a ladder or something, or anything, just to get his elevation. In a photograph which appears with this article you can see how, when President Wilson was visiting the spot in the woods where the Germans had placed their guns which fired shells seventy-three miles into Paris, Murphy found his two-foot elevation on the platform of the gun.

A Detective's Life

OF MORAN'S present staff Murphy, "Dick" Jervis and James Sloan, now chief of the St. Louis district, are the only men who served under the past three Presidents. In the McKinley days there was no regular presidential body-guard; if there had been, McKinley would never have been shot. No man with a bandaged hand like that of McKinley's assassin would have got by these trained Secret Service men.

"I've done some church-going in my time," I heard Murphy say one day. "I went to the Dutch Reformed church with Roosevelt. I went to the Unitarian church with Taft, and I've gone to the Presbyterian and the Episcopal churches with President and Mrs. Wilson. I'm a Catholic and it is necessary for me to go to my own church every Sunday. I never miss it. So what I don't know about different churches isn't so very much."

Incidentally, the Secret Service men do not have any opportunity to vote for the man they will afterward protect. Murphy has had opportunity to vote only twice in his lifetime. Chief Moran, being a resident of Washington, has no opportunity to vote at all. On Election Day, the Secret Service men must go with the President to his own home town to protect him while he is voting. It has never happened that a Secret Service man voted in the same town where the President-to-be cast his vote.

In the way of Presidents the Secret Service men have to take what the voters give them, and they find every incoming President changes their routine of life and even their habits.

Roosevelt made life hard for them.

At every doorway in the White House, Chief Moran has a Secret Service man on guard. He is connected both by push-buttons and by telephone with the body-guard reserves. Whenever Roosevelt or Taft or Wilson started from the White House, the Secret Service man at the door through which he passed gave the signal. This signal is equivalent to an alarm in a fire-house. The Secret Service automobiles dash to the White House. The men who are stationed nearest to the door jump in and follow the President. The President can not leave the place without this escort. These men, indeed, are not under his orders, but under the Treasury Department and Chief Moran.

Under Roosevelt

PUBLICLY Roosevelt, Taft and Wilson never appeared to notice them; privately—as in the case of the *George Washington's* quartet—they often fitted well into presidential parties. All three of the Presidents who have had guards have tolerated them and their presence, seeming to realize that they were a necessity or a penalty of greatness. Roosevelt had a way of seeming to look through them, as if they were invisible spooks. But, riding his hardest, or running, as he used to, afoot, through the swamps of what is now the Potomac Drive, he could not get away from them, for when Roosevelt was in a fit of athleticism, only the best and youngest and spryest men were on the job.

Murphy was one of these. I asked him, one day, about some of Roosevelt's athletics.

"You had to be in fine shape to keep up with Roosevelt," he said. "Roosevelt used to like to take diplomats and Army men and put them through their paces. He would walk them out to Rock Creek Park, about five miles from the center of town, and just when they were ready to quit, after the walk, Roosevelt would start in. He would climb down cliffs. He would take them to a ravine where they would have to haul themselves up over the rocks by their hands. Then he would dash at the creek. He knew where all the deep holes were.

His guests would always have to follow

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him, if they wanted to keep in his good graces. He would ford the creek this way half a dozen times during an afternoon. We would always follow him, of course, but I've seen more than one famous man drop out of the chase. With his clothes wet, he would start back for town, walking at a terrific speed. When he got within two miles of the White House he would break into a run. We always kept up with him. We were in fine physical shape in those days. He never laughed at us for the hardships he was putting us through. He never seemed to notice whether we wound up panting or not. He seemed to take it for granted that *we* would be with him and that he couldn't shake us. He knew it was our job to go along with him and he was always fine about it."

Under Taft

LIFE with Taft meant social activities. That was the evening-clothes period of the Secret Service. There was much travel, with many banquets, and Secret Service men sat at the banquet-table or attended social functions with the same pertinacity that Joe Murphy and Jervis and Sloan followed Roosevelt through Rock Creek. Woodrow Wilson, in spite of the opinion that he is studious and a house man, has kept the Secret Service men busier than either Roosevelt or Taft. His golf, in recent years, has called him out almost daily while he was home and well. Early in his first term he took to horseback riding, and men like Murphy and Ed Starling and Richard Jervis—the two latter have chased train-robbers in the West—had an opportunity to show what horseback riding really can be when an athlete takes to it. One night the President and Mrs. Wilson put on rain clothes and, without warning, started out on a two-mile walk in a pelting rain. The Secret Service men, with no opportunity to find their rainy-weather garments, followed them and got a soaking. One night a week at the theatre was Wilson's routine in peace times. He usually chose the leading vaudeville theatre in Washington, and I have heard Washington newspaper men say that Wilson and the Secret Service men rarely laughed at the same acts. The President liked speedy musical turns, and his heartiest laughter was drawn out by knockabout comedians. One or two of his body-guards are lovers of Shakespeare and Ibsen and devotees of highbrow music.

Chief Moran and the Washington Secret Service men all say that the trip which President Wilson took over the country in 1919 gave them the hardest work of their lives. The experiences of Europe were child's play beside it. The I. W. W. scare and the Bolshevik jollywabbles were on the country at the time, and it was necessary for the Secret Service men to take the utmost precautions to see that their charge was not unduly annoyed.

The Secret Service men are always present. In this Decoration Day scene in France, the gentleman in the straw hat is Miles McCahill, of the President's body-guard.

The Science of Body-Guarding

IN THE first place, before the trip started, Chief Moran laid out special flatfooted, unchangeable, iron-clad orders. There were certain things that the Secret Service men were not to permit either individuals or crowds to do. It didn't matter that some individual might think himself in the right in doing these things; that he might be doing them unwittingly. "Force, force without stint," was to be used, if necessary.

More than one citizen got a touch of the Secret Service men's roughness during the trip, without having an opportunity to argue or to explain. And these Secret Service men can be pretty rough if they have to; being rough is one of the things they sometimes have to be to all men. There are certain movements that must be considered as suspicious, whether they really are or not. The Secret Service men must act first in such cases; and act quickly; if there is any explanation to be made afterward, it may be made—and then again, it may not. There is a science of body-guarding, with rules and codes, and, in the midst of the tumult of crowds these body-guards must be coolly and quietly and easily seeing that these rules and codes are carried out to the letter.

On the Western trip, for instance, with an enthusiastic crowd surging around the President's car, Murphy saw a man up a tree. There was some rule violated there. A sharp, short word from Murphy to one of his men settled it. Within a minute that astonished man was coming down from the branches with a Secret Service

Photo by Capt. Edward N. Jackson, U. S. A.

President Wilson entering the Hotel Crillon. On his right is Miles C. McCahill, behind him is John J. Fitzgerald, both of the Secret Service, and on his left is Joseph E. Murphy, recently promoted assistant to Chief Moran. Behind the President is the ever-faithful, ever-present Admiral Grayson, Wilson's private physician.

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man hanging to him. He tried to explain, but the Secret Service man couldn't wait. On the ground the citizen was violating no rules; up in the tree it was another matter. So far as the hurried Secret Service man was concerned, the incident was closed.

There were plenty of anarchists and I. W. W's who were to be feared in the West. Chief Moran sent Richard Jervis, who recently has been promoted to the head of the White House detail, five days in advance of the party to arrange with the local Treasury Department men and the municipal police for cooperation with the White House detail when it arrived with the President. Moran, back in his office in Washington, with endless telegrams and maps and reports, sat guiding the arrangements. With Jervis ahead, like a theatrical advance man, Murphy went with the train.

Murphy and Starling rode in the presidential car, Starling, as many newspaper and moving-picture photographs indicated at the time, riding erect on the running-board, while Murphy sat beside the driver. That big Kentucky tobacco-farmer, Starling, so huge and handsome that in his evening clothes he outshone most statesmen, and other ordinary mortals who appeared at great state functions in Europe or America, stood ready to take into his big hands anything that came his way from the crowds. During that ten-thousand-mile trip not one bouquet of flowers thrown at the President ever reached him. Following one of Chief Moran's iron-clad rules, Walter Ferguson, a first-class athlete, made a record as a bouquet short-stop that will never be equaled.

Rough Work

"CROWD-WORK," as the Secret Service men call it, was extremely difficult on the trip. Arnold Landvoigt, who, throughout his career at the White House, has been such a devotee of athletics and boxing that he has, two or three times, been put out of service by black eyes or minor injuries, went on foot near the President's automobile. He understands French and German; he went to school at Heidelberg. His ears were strained, in the crowds. Often he took to the sidewalks and forced his way through the masses. Perhaps it would be difficult to prove to some persons in the crowds that he can be as dapper and gentle and gracious as he can be rough, but that is the truth. There are few men in the United States who could stand up to him in a quick rough-and-tumble. And he runs a hundred yards in ten seconds, so the man who didn't stand up with him would be in trouble nevertheless.

Photo by Capt. Edward N. Jackson, U. S. A.

President Wilson playing shuffle-board on board U. S. S. George Washington. He is being guarded by Miles C. McCahill of the Secret Service, and a U. S. Marine.

In the "crowd-work" Walter Ferguson remained near the car. He is an expert boxer and wrestler, and his "quick holds" in a rough-and-tumble make it difficult for him to find any one to practise with him.

Another man on foot was John Queen Slye. We all called him "Jack" in Paris. He has a busy mind. He has written movie scenarios, and inventions haunt him. When he learned that chains were never used on automobiles in Paris, he set about inventing a brake that would stop an automobile within a distance of a few feet, to stop skidding.

You might have seen Miles McCahill also, if President Wilson came to your town last summer. He, too, was afoot, behind the President's car or somewhere very near it, and with him was John Fitzgerald.

And there were others, too, whose names and photographs never appear in the public prints. There must not be too much publicity about such work.

Great Yarns

THERE are stories enough in this group of men to keep any President who loves detective stories entertained for evenings on end. Any man who knows these fellows could make up a program that would keep a lecture platform busy.

Chief Moran can tell at least one good story about every counterfeiter that has been arrested in the United States for the past thirty years. He can show you more things about the markings on a dollar bill, a ten-dollar note or a fifty-dollar Liberty bond, than you can comprehend. Murphy among his other experiences lived one solid year in the Bowery, as a down-and-out wreck of a man, before he had trailed down a counterfeiter who was selling his wares in crookdom.

Photo by Capt. Edward N. Jackson, U. S. A.

"Eagle-Eye Joe" Murphy on guard on the platform of one of Germany's seventy-three-mile-firing guns. When the President comes to a standstill, Murphy always stands where he can be two feet higher than the Executive.

If you ask Murphy to speak to you in Bowery jargon, he can climb right out of the dictionary, and the English language itself, and use words you've never heard before. "Dick" Jervis, if you ask an evening's entertainment from him, will either give you an evening of music at the piano or, if you prefer something more vigorous, he will tell you of days and nights spent in gambling-houses in the West where he was running down gangs of counterfeiters. He will tell you how to run a gambling-house, if you please, and he can fill a whole evening with stories of how clever men have put their brains to the unholy purpose of trying to beat Uncle Sam at the game of manufacturing money.

Entertaining Presidents

McCAHILL and Landvoigt, too, could tell of German-spy plots in the United States and of living as waiters and crooks in various American cities until they had stalked their prey. And all the time, as they talked, you could be sure that they knew many other things too secret to be told, about—how Uncle Sam frustrated every German plot in the United States and sent all the official plotters home in disgrace, both in their own land and in ours.

So far as I know, no President has ever called upon them for entertainment. No one, of course, knows now who will be the next President of the United States, but, if the eyes of that man chance to fall upon these lines, I suggest to him that he will miss a good bet if he doesn't get personally acquainted with his body-guard. The nearest any President ever came to calling upon these men for social relaxation was when the *George Washington* was bound for home, after the Peace Treaty was signed. Every evening on that trip old songs were thrown on the movie-screen, and while the President with his wife and Miss Margaret Wilson and other members of the party did their best at making music, the Secret Service quartet always led in the singing.

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Mary Wollaston

By Henry Kitchell Webster

Author of "The Real Adventure," "The White Arc," etc.

SYNOPSIS

THE story opens with an introduction to Dr. John Wollaston, his young, beautiful and gifted second wife, Paula, who was an opera-singer before her marriage, and his sister, Lucille, who acts as his housekeeper. One day at breakfast the latter announces that she has engaged a discharged soldier, Anthony March, whom she has met by chance, to tune the drawing-room piano. He comes. Paula encounters him, and finds him not only an unusual piano-tuner, but a composer of great promise, and encourages him to bring her some of his songs. Her interest in Anthony March is not shared by her husband, who, in spite of her devotion to him, is at times overcome by a jealousy which he himself knows to be unreasonable.

Doctor Wollaston's daughter, Mary—a bewildering contradiction of a girl—has drifted away from her father since his marriage, in spite of her real love for him and her half-unwilling admiration for his wife. She has been doing war work in New York, and when the story opens is awaiting the arrival of her brother, Rush, from overseas. She misses him at the boat, but that night she accidentally meets him in a restaurant where he is celebrating luridly. He has been drinking heavily, but insists upon leaving his party and accompanying her home. Next day he goes through various stages of disgust with himself to a sympathetic consideration of Mary's state of nerves; he pronounces her a "case of shell shock" and declares his intention of making her go home to Chicago with him.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Picture Puzzle

THERE was a good quarter of an hour beginning with the tear-blurred moment when Mary caught sight of her father looking for her and Rush down the railway station platform, during which the whole fabric of misgivings about her home-coming dissolved as dreams do when one wakes. It had not been a dream she knew, nor the mere concoction of her morbid fancy.

He had not looked at her like this nor kissed her like this—not since that fatal journey to Vienna five years ago. Had something happened between him and Paula that made the difference? Or was it her brother's presence, that, serving somehow to take off the edge, worked a mysterious catalysis?

When John, after standing off and gazing wordless for a moment at this new son of his, this man he had never seen, in his captain's uniform with bits of ribbon on the breast of it—tried to say how proud he was and choked instead, it was for Mary that he reached out an unconscious embracing arm, the emotion which would not go into words finding an outlet for itself that way.

When they got out to the motor and old Pete, once coachman, now chauffeur, his eyes gleaming over the way Rush had all but hugged him, said to her, "You home to stay, too, Miss Mary?" her father's hand, which clasped her arm, revealed the thrilling interest with which he awaited her answer to that question. The importunity of the red-cap with the luggage relieved her of the necessity for answering, but the answer in her heart just then was "Yes."

It was with a wry, self-scornful smile that she recalled, later that day, the emotions of the ride home. If at any time before they got to the house, her father had repeated the old servant's question, "Are you home to stay, Mary?" she would, she knew, have kissed the hand that she held clasped in hers, wept blissfully over it and told him she wanted never to go away again. She hadn't minded his not asking because she thought she knew quite surely why he had not. He was afraid to risk his momentary happiness upon her answer. And why had she not volunteered the assurance he wanted so eagerly and dared not ask for? The beastly answer to that question was that she had enjoyed the thrill of his uncertainty—a miserable sort of feline coquetry.

But it had been short-lived, that little triumph of hers. It had stopped against a blank wall just when the car stopped under the *porte cochère* of the Dearborn Avenue house. John's arm, which had been around her, was withdrawn and he looked with just a touch of ostentation at his watch. He knew before he spoke that when he did his tone would ring flat. The old spell was broken. He was once more under the dominion of the newer, stronger one.

"I'm terribly late," he said. "I must drive straight along to the hospital. I'll see you to-night. We're having a few old friends in to dinner. Run along now. Your Aunt Lucille will be waiting for you."

His omission to mention Paula had been fairly palpable. Her reply, "All right, Dad, till to-night, then. *Au 'voir*," had been, she knew, as brittle and sharp-edged as a bit of broken glass. It had cut him; she had meant it to.

Well, it served her right. Paula deserved to own the stronger spell. Paula's emotional channels were open and deep. No choking snags and sand-bars, no perverse eddies in them. Look at her with Rush to-day! There was a situation that fairly bristled with opportunities for going wrong. She might, with this grown-up son of her husband's whom she had hardly seen, have shown herself shy, embarrassed, at a loss how to take him. She might have tried to be archly maternal with him or elder-sisterly. But she played up none of these sentimental possibilities, seemed, indeed, serenely unaware of them. She treated him just as she had always treated Mary—as a contemporary. From the beginning she had no trouble making him talk. For one thing, her acquaintance with France and Germany was intimate enough to enable her to ask him questions which he found it pleasantly stimulating to try to answer. As she felt her way to firmer ground with him, she allowed what was evidently a perfectly spontaneous affection to irradiate the look she turned upon him and to warm her lovely voice.

So she must have begun—as simply and irresistibly as that—in Vienna!

Mary tried hard to think of this as a highly skilful performance, but it was an attitude she could not maintain. It was not a performance at all; it was—Paula, who, having taken her father away from her, was now, inevitably, going to take her brother too. Not because she meant to—quite unconscious that she was doing any harm ("and of course she isn't, except to a cat like me")—that was the maddening and, at the same time, endearing thing about her.

For there was a broad impartiality about her spell that tugged at Mary even while she forlornly watched Rush yielding to it. And the way it affected Aunt Lucille was simply funny. She melted, visibly, like a fragment left on the curb by the iceman, whenever Paula turned the current on. What made this the more striking was that Aunt Lucille's normal mood to-day impressed Mary as rather aggressively self-contained. Was it just that Mary had forgotten how straight she sat and how precisely she moved about? Had she always had that discreet, significant air, as if there were something she could talk about but didn't mean to—not on any account? Or was there something going on here at home that awaited—breathlessly awaited—discovery? Whatever it was, when Paula turned upon her it went, laughably, only it would have been a shaky sort of laugh.

It was after lunch that Paula electrified them by suggesting that they all go together to a matinée. That's an illustration of the power she had. To each of the three, to Lucille and to Mary as well as to the now infatuated Rush, she could make a commonplace scheme like that seem an irresistibly enticing adventure. Lucille recovered her balance first, but it was not until Nat had fetched the morning paper and they had discussed their choice of entertainments for two or three minutes that she said of course she couldn't go. She didn't know what she'd been thinking of. The number of things imperatively to be done or seen to in preparation for the party to-night would keep her busy all the afternoon.

Then Mary followed suit. If this was really going to be a party—she hadn't quite got this idea in focus before—she'd have to spend the afternoon unpacking and putting her frocks in order or she wouldn't have anything to wear.

"Well," Paula said comfortably, "until they turn me on like a victrola at nine o'clock or so, I've nothing to do with the party except not think about it." She made this observation at large, then turned on Rush. "You'll come with me, won't you, and keep me from getting frightened until tea-time?"

Rush would go—rather!—but he laughed at the word "frightened."

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"I'm not joking," she said, and reaching out, she covered his hand, which rested on the cloth, with one of hers.

He flushed instantly at that; then said to the others with slightly elaborated surprise, "It *is* cold, for a fact."

"So is the other one," said Paula. "For that matter, so are my feet. And getting colder every minute. Come along or we'll be late."

Mary branded this as a bit of rather crude coquetry. It wasn't conceivable that a professional opera-singer of Paula's experience could look forward with any sort of emotion to the mere singing of a few songs to a group of familiar friends. It occurred to her, too, that Paula had calculated on her refusal to go to the matinée as definitely as on Aunt Lucille's, and for a moment she indulged the idea of changing her mind and going along with them just to frustrate this design. Only, of course, it wouldn't work that way. She couldn't keep Rush from being taken away from her by playing the spoil-sport. She couldn't keep him anyhow, she supposed. She made a hasty rather forlorn retreat to her own room as soon as the departing pair were safely out of the house.

That room of hers exerted now a rather curious effect upon her mood. It had been hers ever since her graduation from the nursery and it, like her brother's, adjoining, had been kept unchanged, unoccupied during her long absence. Coming to it now, as to port after storms, with the intention almost openly avowed to herself of lying down upon the bed and, for an hour or two, feeling as sorry for herself as she could, she found an appalling strangeness about its very familiarity that pulled her up short. The abyss she stared into between herself and the Mary Wollaston whose image was so sharply evoked by the ridiculously unchanged paraphernalia of that Mary's life, turned her, literally, giddy. Even the face that looked back at her from the frame of that mirror seemed the other Mary's rather than her own.

From the doorway she stood, for a moment, staring. Then she managed a smile (it was the only possible attitude to take) at the brown Sir Galahad framed in black oak above the bed. The notion of flinging herself down for a self-pitying revel upon that bed—the other Mary's virginal little narrow bed—had become unthinkable. The thing to do was to stop thinking. Quickly.

She stripped off her suit and blouse, slipped on a pongee kimono that she got out of her hand-bag, unlocked her trunk and began discharging its contents all about the room. She covered the chairs with them, the bed, the narrow table—that had never had anything upon it but that Fra Angelico triptych and the two candlesticks—the round table with the reading-lamp, the writing-desk in the corner, the floor. Then, a little out of breath, she paused.

Which among two or three possible frocks should she wear for the party to-night? What sort of party was it going to be anyhow? It was curious, considering the fact that they had done nothing but sit and talk all the morning, how vague her ideas about it were. Her father had said something out in the car about having a few old friends in for dinner. Paula was going to sing and professed herself frightened by the prospect. Also she had cited it as the reason for an unusually and almost strenuously unoccupied day. On the other hand, it was keeping Aunt Lucille distractedly busy.

Was it the chance result of their preoccupation with other things that she had been given no more intelligible account of it, or was it something that all three of them, her father, Paula and Aunt Lucille, were walking round the edge of? The focus of some seriously trivial quarrel? Was that why Paula was so elaborately disengaged and Aunt Lucille so portentous? Was it even, perhaps, why her father had so abruptly fled this morning without coming into the house?

She treated this surmise kindly. It was something to think about anyhow; something to sharpen her wits upon, just as a cat stretches her claws in the nap of the drawing-room rug. She rescued from oblivion half a dozen remarks heard during the morning, whose significance had gone over her head, and tentatively fitted them together like bits of a picture puzzle. She hadn't enough to go on, but she believed there was something there. And when a little later in the afternoon, she heard, along with a knock on her door, her aunt asking if she might come in, she gave her an enthusiastic welcome, scooped an armful of things out of a chair and cleared a sitting space for herself at the foot of the bed.

"Would this blue thing do for to-night?" she asked. "Or isn't it enough of an affair? What sort of party is it, anyhow?"

"Goodness knows," said Lucille. "Between your father and Paula I find it rather upsetting."

Mary had reached out negligently for her cigaret case, lighted one, and, letting it droop at a rather impossible angle, supported by the lightest pressure of her lips so that the smoke crept up over her face into her lashes and her hair, folded her hands demurely in her lap and waited for her aunt to go on. She was mischievously half aware of the disturbing effect of this sort of thing upon Lucille. And indeed it was no wonder, for the abandoned liberties the cigaret was taking with the seraphic youthful contours of that face would have fascinated anybody.

"What has there been between them?" Mary asked, when it became clear that her aunt needed prompting. "Between father and Paula, I mean. Not a row?"

Mary never used language like that except provocatively. It worked on her aunt as she had meant it to.

"There has been nothing between them," she said, "that requires a rowdy word like that to express. It has not been even a quarrel. But they have been for the last day or two, a little—at——"

"Outs?" Mary suggested.

This had been the word on Lucille's tongue. "At cross-purposes," she amended and paused again. But Mary, seeing that she was fairly launched, waited, economically meanwhile inhaling all the smoke from her cigaret. "I suppose after all it's quite natural," Lucille began, "that Paula should attract geniuses, since she's rather by way of being one herself."

"Who is the genius she's attracting now? Doesn't father like him? He being not asked to the party? I'm sorry, aunt, I didn't mean to interrupt."

"He is being asked, which, it appears, is what Paula objects to, only not until after dinner. That she insisted upon. Really," she went on, in response to her niece's perplexed frown, "I shall be much more intelligible if you'll let me begin at the beginning."

"Please do," said Mary. "Where did Paula find him?"

"I found him," said Miss Wollaston. "Paula discovered him a little later. I found him on a bench in the park and told him he might come and tune the drawing-room piano. Paula had him tune her piano instead and spent what must have been a rather mad day with him over it. He brought round some songs the next day for her to try and she and Portia Stanton's husband have been practising them with hardly any intermission since. The idea was that when they had "got them up," as they say, the man—March his name is, Anthony March, I think—should be invited round to hear Paula sing them. Paula insists, absurdly it seems to me, that he never has heard a note of them himself; that he can't even play them upon the piano. How he could compose them without playing them on the piano first, is beyond me. But she is inclined to be a little emotional, I think, over the whole episode. Quite naturally—even Paula can't deny that—your father thought he would like to be present when the songs were sung and it was arranged that it should be this evening."

"She may not have been able to deny that it was natural," Mary observed, "but I'd bet she didn't like it."

"It's only fair to Paula to say," Miss Wollaston insisted, "that she did nothing to exhibit a feeling of that sort. But when, at John's suggestion, I spoke of the possibility of having in the Cravens and the Blakes—the Cravens are very musical, you know—and Wallace Hood, who would be really hurt if we left him out, Paula came nearer to being downright rude than she often allows herself to be. She said among other things that she didn't propose to have March subjected to a 'suffocating' affair like that. She said she wanted him free to interrupt as often as he liked and tell them how rotten they were. That was her phrase. When I observed that Mr. March didn't impress me as the sort of person who could conceivably wish to be rude as that, she said he could no more remember to be polite when he heard those songs for the first time than she herself could sing them in corsets. She summed it up by saying that it wasn't going to be a polite affair and the fewer polite people there were hanging about the better. There was, naturally, nothing I could say to that."

"I should think not!" said Mary, exhaling rather explosively an enormous cloud of smoke. "Poor Aunt Lucille." Her commiseration didn't sound more than skin deep.

"The matter rested there," the elder woman went on, "until your father received Rush's telegram that you were coming to-day. Then he took matters into his own hands and gave me a list of the people he wanted asked. There are to be about a dozen besides ourselves at dinner and perhaps as many more are to come after."

"I can see Paula when you told her

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"I found him," said Miss Wollaston. "Paula discovered him a little later."

that," Mary reflected. "Or did you make Dad tell her himself? Yes, of course you did. Only what I can't understand is, why Paula didn't say, 'All right. Have your party, and I'll sing if you want me to. Only not what's-his-name—March's songs,' and have him all to herself, as she wanted him, later. That could have been made in one move, I should think."

Then, at the fleeting look she caught in the act of vanishing from her aunt's face she cried, "You mean she *did* say that? And that Father turned to ice, the way he can and—made a point of it? You know it's serious, if he's done that."

With a vigor meant to compensate for a sad lack of conviction, Miss Wollaston protested against this chain of unwarranted assumptions. But she admitted, at last, that her own surmise accorded with that of her niece. John certainly had said to her at breakfast that he saw no reason for foregoing the musical feature of the evening simply because an audience was to be present to hear it. Paula's only comment had been a dispassionate prediction that it wouldn't work. It wouldn't be fair to say she sulked; her rather elaborate detachment had been too good-humored for that. Her statement, at lunch, that she was to be turned on like a victrola at half-past nine was a fair sample.

"What's he like, this genius of hers?" Mary wanted to know. "Young and downy and helpless, I suppose. With a look as if he was just about to burst into tears. I met one like that last winter." She knew exactly how to get results out of her aunt.

"He's not in the least like that! If he had been I should never have brought him home, not even to tune the piano. He's quite a well-behaved sensible-appearing young man, a little over thirty, I should say. And he does speak nicely, though I think Paula exaggerates about that."

"Sensible or not, he's fallen wildly in love with her, of course," Mary observed. "The more so they are, the more instantaneously they do it."

But this lead was one Miss Wollaston absolutely declined to follow. "If that clock's right," she exclaimed, gazing at a little traveling affair Mary had brought home with her, "I haven't another minute." It was not right, for it was still keeping New York time, but the diversion served. "Wallace Hood spoke of running in to see you for a minute about tea-time," she said from the doorway. "I'm going to be too busy even to stop for a cup, so do be down if you can."

CHAPTER FIVE

John Makes a Point of It

MARY was warmly touched by the thought of Wallace's coming to see her in that special sort of way, when he was certain of finding her at dinner an hour or two later. Her feelings about him were rather mixed, but he dated back to the very earliest of her memories; and his kindly affectionate attitude toward her had never failed, even during those periods when she had treated him most detestably. Even as a little girl she had been aware of his sentimental attachment to her mother, and perhaps in a vague instinctive way had resented it, though her actual indictment against Wallace in those days had always been that he made her naughty; incited her by his perpetual assumption that she was the angelic little creature she looked, to one desperate misdemeanor after another for which her father usually punished her. Mary had, superficially anyhow, her mother's looks along with her father's temper.

But for two years after Mrs. Wollaston's death, she and Wallace had been very good friends. She was grateful to him for treating her like a grown-up, for talking to her, as he often did, about her mother and how much she had meant to him. She owed it, indeed, largely to Wallace, that her memories of this sentimental, romantic, passionless lady with whom in life she had never been completely in sympathy, were as sweet and satisfactory as they were. He had taken infinite pains with her, guiding her reading and her enjoyment of pictures in the paths of good taste. He took her to concerts sometimes, too, though at this point her docility ceased. She wouldn't be musical for anybody. He gave her much-needed advice in dealing with social matters which her sudden prematurity forced her to cope with. And with all this went a placidity which had no part at all in her relations with her father.

She got the idea, during this period, that he meant, when she was a little older, to ask her to marry him, and she sometimes speculated whether, if he did, she would. There would be something beautifully appropriate about it—like "The Professor's Love Story." Usually, though, she terminated the scene with a tender refusal.

She had long known, of course, how unreal all this was. Wallace had faded out into complete invisibility at the time when she fell in love with Captain Burch and quarreled with her father about him.

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She couldn't remember afterward whether he had even been on the scene or not. But the savor of their friendship, though mild, was a pleasant one, and there was none of her old acquaintances she'd rather have looked forward to to-day at tea-time in the drawing-room. She knew exactly what he would be like; just what they would say to each other. The only doubt in her mind was whether he'd bring her chocolates or daffodils.

She guessed wrong. It was a box of candied strawberries that he gave her as soon as their double hand-shake set him free. But nothing else came at once to the surface to falsify her pre-vision. She remembered how he liked his tea, and was able to get an affectionate warmth into her voice, that sounded real though strangely enough it wasn't, in agreeing with him how like old times this was and how good it seemed to be home. Then came the joy of having Rush back again, and the war, and the Peace Conference—only we weren't going to talk about things like that. And then Alan Seeger, Rupert Brooke, Coningsby Dawson.

But oddly enough, she felt herself going back to still older times, to the abominable little girl who had yielded to irresistible desires, such as making faces at him and rubbing the nap of his silk hat the wrong way. She repressed, vigorously, this lawless vein. She was determined for this one day to be just as nice as he tried so hard to think she was. But with this resolution occupying her mind the talk presently ran rather thin, her contribution to it for whole minutes drying up entirely. It was after a rather blank little silence that he said he supposed Paula was lying down, resting for to-night's performance. His inflection struck Mary as a little too casual, and reminded her that it was his first mention of her stepmother's name. This brought her attention into focus.

"Oh, Paula's off playing with Rush," she said. "I believe they went to a matinée."

He exclaimed at that, over Paula's stores of energy and her reckless ways of spending them. He said she gave him the impression of being absolutely tireless, superimposing a high-speed society existence which John Wollaston and he, in relays, could hardly keep up with, upon the heavy routine of work in her studio. He illustrated this with a detailed schedule of her activities during the past three days. "Oh, yes," he threw in, in parentheses, "I'm as much in the family as ever. When your father can't do escort duty, they call on me." He added in conclusion that he was glad she had already made a start toward getting acquainted with Rush.

Was this relief, Mary wondered? At learning that she was not at this moment engaged less domestically somewhere with Anthony March? But she doubted whether this was a good guess. If he did feel any such relief, it was not, at all events, from a personal jealousy; for the illuminating conviction had come over her that Wallace could not possibly be one of Paula's conquests. A man still capable of cherishing as the most beautiful event of his life that sentimental platonic friendship he had enjoyed with her mother would be immune against Paula's spells.

She wondered if he wasn't a little afraid of Paula. If he did not, in his heart, actually dislike her. But if this were true, why did he willingly devote so many of his hours to squiring her about, substituting for her husband? She told herself, as one discovering a great truth, that a substitute was exactly what Heaven had ordained Wallace Hood to be. She kept him going about Paula easily enough, as a sort of *obbligato* to these meditations, and her name was on Wallace's lips when John Wollaston came into the room.

"Where is she?" he asked Mary. "I hoped I'd find her resting for to-night." Evidently he had been up to her room to see. The relief was plainly legible in his face when he got Mary's answer.

"She and Rush, eh!" he said. "I'm glad they've made a start together, but they ought to be back by now. They drove, didn't they?"

She couldn't inform him as to that and by way of getting him to come to anchor, offered him his tea.

"Oh, I'll wait for the others," he said. "They can't be much later than this. I'm glad she's taken a vacation from those songs," he went on presently from the fireplace. "She told me last night she'd been working all day with Novelli over them. Only sent him home about half an hour before it was time for her to dress for dinner. Do you suppose"—this to Wallace—"that they're as wonderful as she thinks they are?"

It was obvious to Mary that Hood's reply was calculated to soothe; his attitude was indulgent and mildly amused. He talked to Mary about March as just another of Paula's delightful extravagances. March's indignant refusal, at first, to tune the Circassian grand, his trick of sitting on the floor under Paula's piano while she played for him, his forgetting to be paid, though he had not, in all probability, a cent in his pockets, were exhibited as whimsicalities, such as Wallace's favorite author, J. M. Barrie, might have invented. It was just like Paula to take him up as she had done, to work away for days at his songs, proclaiming the wonder of them all the while. "We're all hoping, of course," he concluded, "that when she's finished with them to-night, she'll sing us some of the old familiar music we really love."

The neat complacent finality of all this produced momentarily the effect of ranging Mary on the other side, with Paula and her musician. But just at this point she lost her character of disinterested spectator, for Wallace, having put March back in his box and laid him deliberately on the shelf, abruptly produced by way of diversion another piece of goods altogether.

"I hope Mary's come home to stay," he said to John. "We can't let her go away again, can we?"

Afterward she was able to see that it was a natural enough thing for him to have said. It would never have occurred to him, pleasant, harmless sentimentalist that he was, that John's second marriage might be a disturbing factor in his relation with Mary, and that the question so cheerfully asked as an escape from the more serious matter that he had been talking about, struck straight into a ganglion of nerves.

But at that time, no such excuse for him presented itself. She stared for a moment, breathless, paled a little and locked her teeth so that they shouldn't chatter, then a wave of bright anger relaxed her stiffened muscles. She did not look at her father, but was aware that he was fixedly not looking at her.

"I don't know whether I am going to stay or not," she said casually enough. "There isn't any particular reason why I should, unless I can find something to do. You haven't a job for me, have you?"

"A job?" Wallace gasped.

"In your office," she exclaimed. "Filing and typing, or running the mimeograph. It seems to be a choice between something like that and—millinery."

"That's an extravagant idea," her father said, trying for, but not quite able to manage, a tone that matched hers. "Good Lord, Wallace, don't sit there looking as if you thought she meant it!"

"You do look perfectly—consternated," she said with a pretty good laugh. "Never mind, I sha'n't do anything outrageous for a week or two. Oh, here they come. Will you ring, Dad? I want some more hot water."

Rush came into the drawing-room alone, Paula having lingered a moment, probably before the mirror in the hall. Mere professional instinct for arranging entrances for herself, Mary surmised this to be. And she may have been right, for Paula was not one of those women who are forever making minute readjustments before a glass. But when she came in just after Wallace Hood had accomplished his welcome of the returned soldier, it was hard to believe that she was concerned about the effect she produced upon the group about the tea-table. She didn't, indeed, altogether join it, gave them a collective nod of greeting with a faint but special smile for her husband on the end of it, and then deliberately seated herself with a "No, don't bother, this is all right," at the end of the little sofa that stood in the curve of the grand piano, rather in the background.

When Mary asked her how she wanted her tea, she said she didn't think she'd have any; and certainly no cakes. No, not even one of Wallace's candied strawberries. There was an exchange of glances between her and Rush over this.

"They have been having tea by themselves, those two," Mary remarked.

"No," said Rush, "not what you could call tea."

Paula smiled vaguely but didn't throw the ball back, did not happen, it appeared, to care to talk about anything. After a little silence the chatter among the rest of them renewed itself.

Only it would have amused an invisible spectator to note how those three Wollastons, blonde, dolichocephalic, high-strung, magnetically susceptible, responded, as strips of gold-leaf to the static electricity about a well-rubbed amber rod, to the influence that emanated from that silent figure on the sofa. Rush, in and out of his chair a dozen times, to flip the ash from his cigaret, to light one for Mary, to hand the strawberries round again, was tugging at his moorings like a captive balloon. When he answered a question it was with the air of interrupting an inaudible tune he was whistling. John, still planted before the fireplace, taking, automatically, a small part in the talk just as he went through the minimum of business with his tea, seemed capable of

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Paula rose. "Very well," she said, "it is settled. Also, it's settled that I shall not come down to dinner. As to what people will think—I'll leave that to you."

just one significant action, which he repeated at short, irregular intervals. He turned his head enough to enable him to see into a mirror which gave him a reflection of his wife's face, then turned away again, like one waiting for some sort of reassurance and not getting it. Mary, muscularly relaxed, indeed drooping over the tea-table, had visible about her, nevertheless, a sort of supernormal alertness. Every time her father looked into the mirror she glanced at him, and she rippled, like still water, at all of her brother's sudden movements.

As for Wallace Hood, one look at him sitting there, as unresponsive to the spell as the cup from which he was sipping its third replenishment of tea, would have explained his domestication in that household—the necessity, in fact, for domesticating among them some one who was always buoyantly upon the surface, whose talk, in comfortably rounded sentences, flowed along with a mild approximation to wit, whose sentiments were never barbed with passion—who was, to sum him up in one embracing word, appropriate.

Mary, in addition to feeling repentant over her outbreak just before Paula came in, experienced a sort of gratitude to him for being able to sit squarely facing the little sofa, untroubled by the absent thoughtful face and the figure a little languorously disposed that confronted him. His bright little generalities were addressed to her as much as to the rest of them; his smile asked the same response from her and nothing more.

Nothing short of an explosion that shattered all their surfaces at once could have got a single vibration out of him. By that same token, when the explosion did occur, he was the most helpless person there, the only one of them who could really be called panic-stricken.

John had, at last, crossed the room and seated himself beside his wife. He spoke to her in a low voice, but her full-throated reply was audible everywhere in the room.

"No, I'm not tired and I really don't want any tea. I've gone slack on purpose because that's how I want to be till nine o'clock. I've just eaten an enormous oyster stew with Rush. That's what we waited for."

John frowned. "My dear, you'll have ruined your appetite for dinner."

"I hope so," she said, "because I'm not to have any."

At that, from the other two men, there began an expostulatory—"No dinner!" "You don't mean——!" but it was

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silenced by John's crisp, "You're planning not to come down to dinner, then?"

"Oh, I'll come down," said Paula, "and I'll sit. But I don't mean to eat anything. Unless you think that will be too much like a—what is it?—skeleton at the feast."

"I think it would seem somewhat—exaggerated," he said.

"Well," Paula retorted, drawing the rest of the room into it again just as Wallace was making a gallant effort to start a subsidiary conversation to serve as a screen, "that's because you haven't heard those songs. If there's a singer in the world who'd dare cut loose with them right after eating the sort of dinner Lucille will have to-night for Mary and Rush, I'd like to see him try it."

"I didn't mean to imply that they were not difficult. I dare say they are all but impossible. But it does seem to me that you are taking the occasion of singing them—a little too—emotionally."

The tone he was trying for was meant to have nothing in it—for other ears than hers, at least, beyond mere good-humored remonstrance. But her reply tore all pretense aside. She let him have it straight.

"You're the one who's being emotional about it," she said.

The blood leaped into his face at that, but he did not reply.

"Look here, John," she went on—and her big voice swept away the polite convention that the others were not listening—"I've told you that this won't work and you must see by now that that's true. There's still time to call up March and tell him that it's to-morrow instead of to-day, because of Rush and Mary. Won't you let me do that?"

It is just possible that if he had been alone with her he might have acknowledged the issue, might have admitted that this new composer whose works she had been so absorbed in, frightened him, figured in his mind as the present manifestation of a force that was trying to take her away from him, and having let her see that, he could safely enough have said: "Have your own way about it. You know what will work and what won't. Only make it as easy for me as you can." But in the presence of his children—it was they, rather than Wallace, that he minded—he was at once evasive and domineering.

"I thought we'd already disposed of that suggestion," he said. "If the situation is as it has been made to appear to me, there is not the smallest reason why March should be put off; why Mary and Rush and the friends we have asked in to meet them shouldn't be permitted to hear his songs; or why I shouldn't myself. I think we'll consider that settled."

Paula rose all in one piece. "Very well," she said to the audience, "it is settled. Also it's settled that I shall not come down to dinner. As for what people will think—I'll leave that to you. You can make any explanation you like. But I shall sing those songs to March—and for him—for all they're worth. I don't care who else is there or whether they like it or not. A lot of patronizing amateurs! Bring them up to the music-room about nine o'clock, if you like. I'll be there."

She left behind her, in that Victorian drawing-room, a silence that tingled.

CHAPTER SIX

Stringendo

A CRISIS of this sort was just what the Wollastons needed to tune them up to concert pitch. The four of them, for Lucille had to be counted in, met the enemy—which is to say, their arriving guests—with an unbroken front. They explained Paula's non-appearance with good-humored unconcern. She was afraid if she sat down to Lucille's dinner that she would forget her duty and eat it and find herself fatally incapacitated for cutting loose on Mr. March's songs afterward. They must be rather remarkable songs that required to be approached in so Spartan a manner. Well, Paula assured us that they were. The family declined all responsibility in the matter, not having themselves heard a note of them, but if you wanted to you might ask Mr. Novelli over there. He'd been working over them with Paula for days. As for the composer, he was as much a mystery as his songs. He wasn't coming to the dinner but was expected to appear from somewhere afterward.

Novelli, as it happened, was not very productive of information. Half an hour before the dinner, his wife had telephoned Lucille to ask if he might bring a guest of his own, a certain Monsieur LaChaise, who was one of the conductors at the Metropolitan, and was to have the direction of the summer opera out here at High Forest this year. Portia added, with the falsely deprecatory air of a mother apologizing for a child's prank, that Pietro had, in fact, already invited him to the dinner, and had only just informed her of the fact. Lucille had assured her, of course, that this addition to the company would cause not the slightest inconvenience, served on the contrary to bring it up to the number that had originally been counted upon.

When LaChaise arrived, the discovery that he talked no English at all beyond a few rudimentary phrases, a fact which normally would have seemed calamitous, was now merely treated as an added feature of the evening. He and Novelli were in the midst of an animated discussion when they arrived. They stuck together in the drawing-room as if locked in the same pair of handcuffs, and seating arrangements at the dinner were hastily revised so that they might go on talking in untroubled mutual absorption straight through the dinner, Rush being placed handily by, where he could come to the rescue in case of need.

It was only the extremest surface of Mary, sitting at the head of the table in Paula's place (which once had been her own) that was engaged with her unforeseen duties as hostess. And yet in a way, the whole of her consciousness had been drawn to the surface. The strong interior excitement that had been burning in her during all this day of her home-coming, the rising conviction that life at home might turn out to be something very different indeed from the thing that it had, down in New York, looked like, the curious blend of foreboding with anticipation that accompanied it, and finally a sense of the imminence of something important, not quite to be accounted for by the quarrel between her father and his wife—all this emotional reaction found its outlet during the long dinner in a quite unusual vivacity. Her sphere of influence spread down the table until it embraced a full half the length of it on both sides and those just beyond the reach of it, aware that they were missing something, listened but distractedly to the talk of their more remote partners. And while she was doing all this she managed with her left hand, as it were, to keep going a vivid little confidential flirtation with the Stannard boy, Graham, a contemporary of hers just back from service on a destroyer.

The thing that stimulated her to all this was a consciousness of her father's intense awareness of her. She had been deliberately evasive of him since his quarrel with Paula. What he wanted of her she knew as well as if he had expressed the need of it in so many words. He had turned to her for it as soon as Paula had gone up-stairs and Rush had accompanied the thoroughly demoralized Wallace into the hall. She had found a certain hard satisfaction in denying it to him, in not nestling up into the arms that happened for the moment to be vacant of Paula. This was so imperative an instinct that she had not even reproached herself for it, though she supposed she would later.

The sense that something in some way or other decisive was going to happen to-night quickened her pulse as she mounted along with the last of their guests to the music-room, in response to Paula's message that Mr. March had come and that the "rehearsal" was about to begin. She looked about eagerly for a man who might be March but could not discover him anywhere. Was he, perhaps, she absurdly wondered, sitting once more under the piano?

Novelli drooped over the keyboard. LaChaise was half hidden in a deep chair in one of the dormers. Paula, her back to the little audience, stood talking to Novelli. Mary allowed herself a faint smile over the expression in those faces that Paula wouldn't look at. The half-concealed impatience, the anticipatory boredom, showed through so unfaltering a determination to do and express to the end the precisely correct thing. Even her father's anger looked out through a mask like that.

LaChaise, from his corner, said something Mary didn't catch, in French. Novelli straightened his back. And in that instant before a note was sounded, Mary's excitement mounted higher. The absorption of those three musicians, the intensity of their preoccupation, visible even in the way LaChaise was sitting in his chair, told her that the something she had expected was going to happen—now. But she did not know that it was going to happen to her.

Long ago the family had acquiesced in Mary's assertion that she was not in the least musical and in her stubborn refusal to "take" anything, even the most elementary course of lessons on the piano. She had been allowed to grow up in an ignorance almost unique in these days, of the whole mystery of musical notation and phraseology, an ignorance that might be reckoned the equivalent of a special talent.

Later, indeed, she had made the discovery—or what would have been a discovery if she had fully admitted it to

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herself—that music sometimes exerted a special power over her emotions. Whether it was a certain sort of music that created the mood or a certain sort of mood that was capable of responding to music, she had never seriously inquired. The critical jargon of the wiseacres which she had heard a great deal of always irritated her. She supposed it meant something, because they seemed intelligible to each other, but she rather enjoyed indulging the presumption that it did not.

When she went to concerts she liked to go alone, or at least to be let alone, to sit back passively and allow the variegated tissue of sound to envelop her spirit as it would. If it bored her, as it frequently did, there was no harm done, no pretense to make. If, as more rarely happened, it stole somehow into complete possession, floated her away upon strange voyages, carried her to vertiginous heights, dropped her, swept her aloft again, tingled along her nerves, pressed breathlessly upon her heart, she was at least immune from analysis and inquisition afterward.

So it was with no critical expectancy that she listened when Novelli began to play; indeed, in the active sense, she did not listen at all. She forgot to be amused by the carefully composed faces about her; she forgot, presently, whose music it was and whose voice she heard. What she felt was a disentanglement, and emergence into more open, wider spaces—cold ethereal spaces. It seemed, though, that it was her own mood the music fitted into, rather than the other way about.

She heard the talk that followed the polite rustle of applause at the first intermission, without being irritated by it, without even listening to what it meant, though here and there a phrase registered itself upon her ear. Henry Craven's "Very modern, of course. No tonality at all, not a cadence in it," and Charlotte Avery's "No form either. And hardly to be called a song. A tone-poem, really, with a part written into it for the voice."

The music began again, and now was given ungrudging credit for the recreation of her mood. Only its admitted beauty created a longing which it did not serve to satisfy. The cold open sky with its mysterious interstellar spaces, the flow of the black devouring clouds, the reemergence of the immortal Pleiades, remote, inhuman, unaware, brought no tranquillity, but only a forlorn human loneliness.

On that note it ended, but Paula with a nod to Novelli, directed him to go straight on to the love-song. The two do not form a sequence in the poem, indeed the love-song occurs very early in it, and the "Burial of the Stars" comes afterward, nearly at the end. But, I think as March did, that Paula's instinct was sound in using the unearthly Schubert-like beauty of the "Burial of the Stars" as a prelude to the purely human passion of the love-song.

It is, I suppose, one of the supreme lyric expressions in the English language of the passion of love. Furthermore, Whitman's free, unmetered swing, the glorious length of his stride, fell in with March's rhythmic idiom as though they had been born under the same star.

The result is one of those happy marriages so rare as to be almost unique, in which the emotional power of a great song is enhanced by its musical setting and where, conversely, a great piece of lyric music gains rather than loses by its words.

March did not use the whole poem. His setting begins on the line "Low hangs the moon," and ends with the "Hither, my love! Here I am! Here!" Why he elected not to go on with it, I don't know. Possibly because his own impulse was spent before Whitman's was; possibly, because he did not wish to impose the darker melancholy of the latter stanzas upon the clear ecstasy of that last call.

It lost something, of course, from the inadequacy of the piano transcription, for it was conceived and written orchestrally. Paula, too, has given finer performances of it—indeed, she sang it better a little later that same evening. But, spurred as she was by the knowledge that the composer was listening to it and by her determination to win a victory for it, she flung herself into it with all the power and passion she had.

I doubt whether any other auditor ever is more completely overwhelmed by it than Mary was. It was so utterly her own, the cry of it so verily the unacknowledged cry of her own heart, that the successive stanzas buried themselves in it like unerring arrows. The intensity of its climax was more poignant, more nearly intolerable, than anything in all the music she had ever heard had been for her before. Limp, wet, breathless, trembling all over, she sat for a matter of minutes after that last ineffable yearning note had died away.

There was a certain variety in the emotions of the rest of the little audience, but they met on common ground in the feeling of not knowing where to look or what to say. Their individuality submerged in a great crowd, they might—most of them—have allowed themselves to be carried away, especially if they'd come in the expectation—founded on the experience of other audiences—that they would be carried away. But to sit like this, all very much aware of each other while a woman they knew, the wife of a man they had long known, proclaimed a naked passion like that, was simply painful. What they didn't know, you see—there was no program to tell them—was whether the thing was inspired or merely dreadful, and when it was over they sat in stony despair, waiting, like children of Israel, for a sign.

It was LaChaise who broke the spell by crossing the room and unceremoniously displacing Novelli at the piano. He turned back to the first sheet of the score and began reading it, at first silently, then humming unintelligible orchestral parts as he was able to infer them from the transcription; finally, with noisy outbursts upon the piano, to which din Novelli contributed with one hand, reached down over the conductor's shoulder. Paula, standing in the curve of the instrument, her elbows on the lid, followed them from her copy of the score. It reached the audience that an alert attitude of attention was no longer required of them. That in fact, so far as the three musicians were concerned, nothing was required of them, not even silence. As an audience they ceased to exist. They were dissolved once more into their social elements and began a little feverishly to talk.

The realization broke over Mary with the intensity of panic that some one of them might speak to her. She rose blindly and slipped out into the hall, but even there she did not feel safe. Some of them, any of them, might follow her. She wanted to hide. There was a small room adjoining the studio, it had been the nurse's bedroom when the other had been the nursery, and its door now stood ajar. She slipped within and closed it very softly behind her.

Here in the grateful half-dark she was safe enough, although the door into the studio was also part way open. There was nothing in here but lumber—an old settee, a bookcase full of discarded volumes from the library and an overflow of Paula's music. No one would think of looking for her in here.

But as she turned her back upon the door that she had just closed, she saw that some one was here, a man in khaki sitting on the edge of that old settee, leaning forward a little, his hands clasped between his knees. She had come in so silently he had not heard her.

It seemed to her afterward that she must have had two simultaneous and contradictory ideas as to who he was. She knew, she must have known instantly, that he was Anthony March, but his uniform suggested Rush and drew her over toward him just as though she had actually believed him to be her brother. And then just as he became aware of her and glanced up, Paula in the other room began singing the last song over again, her great broad voice submerging the buzz of talk like the tide rushing in over a flat. Without a word Mary dropped down beside him on the settee.

In the middle of a phrase the music stopped.

"Prenez-le," they heard LaChaise say to Novelli. "Je ne suis pas assez pianiste. Maintenant! Recommençons! D'ici, n'est-ce pas?"

The song resumed. March's frame stiffened.

"O night! do I not see my love fluttering out
among the breakers?
What is that little black thing I see there in
the white?"

"Now then," March whispered. "Quicker! My God, can't they pick it up?" Like an echo came LaChaise's, "Plus vite! *Stringendo*, jusqu'au bout!" and with a gasp the composer greeted the quickened *tempo*. Then as the song swept to its first tempestuous climax he clutched Mary's arm. "That's it!" he cried. "Can't you see that's it?"

"Loud! loud! loud!
Loud I call to you, my love!
High and clear I shoot my voice over the
waves,
Surely you must know who is here, is here,
You must know who I am, my love."

He let go her arm. The song went on.

"Low-hanging moon!
What is that dusky spot in your brown yellow?
Oh, it is the shape, the shape of my mate!
O moon, do not keep me from her any longer."

From there, without interruption, it swept along to the end.

It was during the ecstatic pianissimo, just before the final section, that their hands clasped. Which of them first sought the contact neither of them knew, but they sat linked like that, tingling, breathless during the lines:

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The singer stood there, a golden glowing thing in the light she had brought in with her. "Where are you?" she asked. Then she came up to March and took hold of him by the arms.

". . . . somewhere I believe I heard my mate responding to me,
So faint I must be still, be still to listen,
But not altogether still, for then she might not come immediately to me."

On the last "Hither, my love! Here I am! Here!" the clasp tightened, convulsively. But it was not until the circuit was broken that the spark really leaped across the gap.

There was no applause in the other room when the song ended for the second time, but it won a clear half-minute of breathless silence before the murmuring eddies of talk began again. During that tight-stretched moment the pair upon the settee, their hands just unclasped, sat motionless, fully aware of each other for the first time, almost unendurably aware, thrilling with the just-arrived sense of the amazing intimacy of the experience they had shared. Neither of them was innocent, but neither had ever known so complete a fusion of his identity with another as this which the spell of his music had produced.

They sat side by side, but not very close, not so close that there was contact anywhere between them, and neither made any move to resume it. Both were trembling uncontrollably and each knew that the other was.

The hum of talk in the other room rose louder and finally became articulate in Charlotte Avery's crisp, "Good-night, my dear Paula, we've had a most interesting evening. I shall hope to hear more of your discovery and see him too, some time, if you make up your mind to exhibit him."

March started from his seat at that. "Don't make any noise," Mary whispered, rising too, and laying a detaining hand upon him, "Nobody will come in here. They'll all go now. We must wait."

He obeyed tractably enough, only turned toward her now and gazed at her—there was light enough coming in from the other room to see by—with undissimulated intensity, not, though, as if speculating who she might be, rather as if wondering whether she were really there.

"Don't you want them to find you either?" he asked.

"Not after that," she stammered, and added instantly, "We mustn't talk."

So, silent once more, they waited while the late audience defiled in irregular slow-moving groups down the hall toward the stairs. Mary distinguished her father's voice, her brother's, her aunt's, all taking valiantly just the right social note. They were covering the retreat in good order. And she heard Portia Stanton taking her husband home. But the music-room was not yet deserted. There were sounds of

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relaxation in there, the striking of a match, the sound of a heavy body, that of LaChaise probably, dropping in to an easy chair.

"And now," Mary heard him say to Paula, "Now fetch out your composer. Where have you had him hidden all this while?"

"He's in there. I was just waiting until they were really gone. I'll get him now, though. No, sit still; I'd rather, myself."

March, however, didn't move; not even when they could hear Paula coming toward the door. He stood there gazing thoughtfully at Mary, his eyes oddly luminous in the dark. It occurred to her that the conversation in the other room had been in French and that he had not understood it.

"Oh, go—quickly!" she had just time to breathe. Then she crowded back, close against the partition wall. The door opened that way, so that when Paula flung it wide it screened her a little.

The singer stood there, a golden glowing thing in the light she had brought in with her. "Where are you?" she asked. Then she came up to March and took hold of him by the arms. "Was it good?" she asked. "Was it—a little—as you meant it to sound?"

When he did not speak, she laughed, a rich low laugh that had a hint of tears in it, pulled him up to her and kissed his cheek. "You don't have to answer, my dear," she said. "Come in and hear what LaChaise has got to say about it."

Without effort, irresistibly, she swept him along with her into the music-room.

Mary, when they were gone, let herself out by the other door as softly as she had come in. She fled down one flight of the stairs and a moment later had locked the door of her own room behind her. She switched on the light, gave a ragged laugh at Sir Galahad, then lay down, just as she was, on the little white bed, her face in the pillow, and cried.

CHAPTER SEVEN

No Thoroughfare

IT WAS hours later, well along toward one o'clock in the morning, when Rush coming into his room saw a light under the door communicating with his sister's, and, knocking on it, was told he might come in.

He found her in bed for the night, reclining against a stack of pillows as if she had been reading, but from the way she blinked at the softened light from the lamp on her night-table, it appeared that she had switched it on only when she heard him coming. She might have been crying, though she looked composed enough now; symmetrically composed, indeed, a braid over each shoulder, her hands folded, her legs straight down the middle of the bed making a single ridge that terminated in a little peak where her feet stuck up. The way heroines lie, it occurred to Rush, in the last act of grand operas, when they are dead; and this effect was enhanced by the new-laundered whiteness of the sheet, neatly folded back over the blankets and the untumbled pillows.

"You always look so nice and clean," he told her, and, forbearing to sit on the edge of the bed as a pat of her hand invited him to, pulled up a chair instead. It was going to be a real talk, not just a casual good-night chat.

"We were wondering what had become of you," he said. "Poor Graham was worried."

"Graham!" But she did not follow that up. "I decided we'd had temperament enough for one evening," she explained in a matter-of-fact tone, "so when I saw I was going to explode I came away quietly and did it in here. By the time it was over I thought I might as well go to bed."

"It doesn't look as if you'd exploded very violently," he observed.

"Oh, I've cleared away the ruins," she said. "I hate reminders of a mess."

It was like her exquisiteness to do a thing like that and it tightened his throat to think about it. He'd have liked to make sure what the cause of the explosion had been, but thought he'd better wait a while for that. All he ventured in the way of sympathetic approbation was to reach out and pat the slim little ridge that extended down the middle of the bed. "It certainly has been one devil of an evening," he said.

"I suppose it has," she agreed thoughtfully. Then, noticing that this had rather thrown him off his stride, she went on, "Tell me all that's been happening since I ran away. What did Paula act like when it was over?"

"I haven't seen her," he said. "She never came down at all. Of course, it must have been—well, in a way, a devil of an evening for her, too. Though I can't believe our being there cramped her style very much in singing those songs. If it did, I'd hate to think what she would have done if we hadn't been. I hope March liked his own stuff. He was there all the while, you know. She must have had him tucked away in that little old room of Annie's that opened off the nursery. Somewhere anyhow, because long after every one else had gone he came down-stairs with the Frenchman. I got one surprise just then all right. He's a private soldier, did you know that? Just a plain doughboy."

"Overseas?" Mary asked.

"As far as Bordeaux, with the Eighty-sixth. Saxaphone player with one of the artillery bands. In a way I'm rather glad of it. That that's what he turns out to be, I mean."

"Why?" Mary made the word rather crisply.

"Oh, well," Rush explained uncomfortably. "You know what it had begun to look like. Paula quarreling with Father about him and not going down to dinner; and—cutting loose like that over his music. But, of course, there couldn't be anything of that sort—with a chap like that."

"What *is* the lowest military rank," Mary inquired, "that you think Paula could fall in love with?"

The satirical import of her question was not lost upon him but he held his ground. "It may sound snobbish, but it's true just the same," he insisted. "A doughboy's a doughboy, and Paula wouldn't get mixed up with one—any more than you would."

There was a little silence after that.

"His music didn't sound to me like doughboy music," Mary observed at last. "Nor his going to Walt Whitman to get the words."

"Was that Walt Whitman? It sounded to me as if he was making it up as he went along." He had the grace to grin at himself over that admission, however. "Oh, well," he concluded, "Paula's all right, of course, anyhow. I think she's—wonderful, myself. Only poor old Dad! He *is* a peach, Mary. It's funny how differently I remember him. He acted like one real sport to-night."

"Afterward, you mean." Mary, it seemed, would not have characterized her father's behavior earlier in the evening in just that way. "Tell me all about it. Only reach me a cigaret first."

He obeyed the latter injunction with an air of protest. "It's the only thing you do that I wish you didn't," he said.

"Why? Do you think it's bad for me?"

He wouldn't commit himself by answering that. The retort it offered her was obvious. "It doesn't seem like you," he explained.

"Very well," she said, taking a light from his match, "then I shall go on just to keep you reminded that I'm not plaster-of-paris. I like to have somebody around who dosen't think that."

"Father doesn't," Rush asserted, and got so eager a look of inquiry from her that he regretted having nothing very substantial to satisfy it with. "Oh, down there in the hall," he said, "after everybody but March and the Frenchman had gone. Aunt Lucille began fussing about you. She was rather up in the air, anyway. She'd done the nonchalant, all right—overdone it a bit, in fact—as long as there was any one around to play up to. But when we had got rid of the Novellis—they were the last—she did a balloon ascension. She had a fit or two in general and then came round to wondering about you. Wanted to know when we'd last seen you—what *could* have happened to you—that sort of thing. I'd been having a little talk with Graham, so I supposed I knew. But of course I said nothing about that."

He was looking rather fixedly away from her and so missed her frown of sheer incomprehension. "Well, but Father?" she asked.

It had been coming over him that what his father had said was not just what he wanted to report to Mary. Not while she felt about him as she had confessed, down there in New York, she did. But he had let himself in for it.

"Why, it wasn't much," he said; "just that nothing could have happened to you; that you wouldn't 'fall off anything and break.' What you said about plaster-of-paris made me think of it. He was only trying to get Aunt Lucille quieted down."

"While he had Paula on his mind, he didn't want to be bothered about me. That's natural enough, of course." Her dry, brittle tone was anything but reassuring. Still, without looking at her, he hurried on:

"Well, it *is* natural that he should be worried about Paula. I know how I'd feel about a thing like that. It was rather weird while we waited after Aunt Lucille went up to bed for those two to come down. Old Nat was fussing around the drawing-room, shutting up and putting things to rights. Dad sent him to bed too, told him we'd do the locking up ourselves. I got the idea that he was expecting Paula to come sailing down, with March you know, and perhaps didn't

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Cadbury's Ghosts

By Henry Payson Dowst

CADBURY was a coward.

Not that even a brave man could have been expected to accept with perfect equanimity so sinister a verdict as that delivered by Doctor Dunning. It carried a sentence of death, and it came to Cadbury almost like lightning out of a clear sky.

But a brave man would have received such a sentence far differently. He would have braced himself after the first shock, and started mentally to file writs of error and demands for a stay, and all the other legal things by which even what appears to be a cold finality may, within the diminishing range of possibility, serve to beat the game. Yes, even the average man who sets up no claim to heroism would have gone that far. But Cadbury didn't. He collapsed.

Doctor Dunning had found it necessary from time to time, during a long and busy career as diagnostician, to tell his patients unpleasant and disturbing things about themselves. He naturally disliked that sort of duty, but it was part of his job and he did it simply and directly, always kindly, to be sure, but seldom beating about the bush. Cadbury was a man thirty-six years old, substantial, intelligent, rational. Had the patient been a nervous woman weakened by suffering, or a child, or some stricken workman with a domestic burden resting heavily upon him, Dunning would have modified his method to suit the demands of the situation. But Cadbury——

Cadbury was thirty-six, fat, blond, round of eye. He was partially blind and wore glasses, and above his tow-colored eyebrows his forehead was marked with lines that had written the word "worry" with almost Spencerian legibility. Yet his neighbors would have been unable to tell you that Cadbury had a trouble in the world.

Cadbury had money, inherited, which yielded him a living income. He was engaged in no business and had no dependents. He was the last of an old and respected family, and as its representative he was socially acceptable anywhere in Cataract. He belonged to the club as a matter of course, knew every one in town because he had been born and had grown up there, played a little golf badly, a little bridge hardly any better, dined out occasionally and was scrupulous about paying his dinner calls, shunned no one and cultivated no one.

People did not actively dislike Cadbury, but he certainly could not be said to have in all Cataract a single admirer. Just as there was nothing about the man to provoke your distaste, you discovered in him nothing to excite your enthusiasm. He was merely a fellow creature.

"Come, come, Nate!" said Dunning, a trifle impatiently. The man's utter funk irritated him. "I'll get you a little drink."

The physician poured out a fairish jolt of rye and presented it to his patient, who managed to get it down with an effort which proclaimed him unaccustomed to strong stimulants. So presently a suggestion of his usually ruddy color returned to the pasty, flabby cheeks, and the harried eyes lost a little of their terror. Cadbury struggled to his feet.

"Guess I'd better be—going," he ventured. He looked babyishly helpless, utterly lost, vague and futile as a new puppy.

"Think you can get home all right?" asked Dunning. "I'll be running up your way shortly, if you care to wait."

Cadbury shook his head uncertainly. "Oh, I guess—I'm all right. You needn't—bother."

"Better get your prescriptions filled right away; and start in to-night with the brown tablets. Now, Nate, don't let this thing eat into you too deep. You'll feel calmer shortly, and get hold of yourself; and remember, I haven't said there wasn't a bare chance for you. Even if I had, you would be welcome to recall that even doctors can make mistakes."

Dunning was trying to be cheerful, but no responding flicker curled Nate Cadbury's lips. He was about as likely to appreciate a touch of humor as if he had just recovered from a whack on the head with a cobblestone. He shuffled painfully toward the door, like a man bowed beneath a burden of years or one stricken with rheumatism; yet rheumatism was not a symptom of the complaint which the physician had diagnosed.

Doctor Dunning knew men in Cataract who, had he told them what he had told Nate Cadbury, would have called him seven different kinds of a liar and knocked his head off to prove their contention. They would have felt that he had taken a mean advantage of them, to discover by a few simple but conclusive tests known only to the medical profession that they had something serious the matter with their supposedly impeccable insides. Some would have given him the loud laugh and told him to go chase himself with his old test-tubes. Still others would have cried cheerfully:

"All right, Doc. You ought to know. I may have an infiltrated epizinctum of the ambulatory gas-meter, or whatever you call it—but you just watch me lick the darn thing! Say, I hear you got into the semi-finals out at Hillbrook. Think you can trim Sparkleton?"

Not Cadbury. Professional ethics to the contrary, Dunning had been tempted to camouflage his opinion and let the cowardly fellow down easy, for a while at least. Why not? Dunning, of all people in Cataract, probably knew Nate best, and most clearly recognized his weaknesses. Cadbury was a jellyfish, nothing more. To the physician's way of thinking he was a hopeless nonessential agglomeration of low-grade protoplasm, a total loss, humanly and socially speaking. He simply wasn't. In fact, he wasn't enough of anything to say what it was he wasn't.

Dunning's estimate of Cadbury, which approximated the hole in a doughnut with the dough deleted, was pretty generally shared by every one in Cataract. Cadbury was perfectly well aware of the public attitude toward him and, strangely, hardly resented it. He went to and fro in that town and walked up and down in it and simply didn't count—with any one except himself.

With himself he actually did count a great deal, and this makes it plain why he was always worried. The extent of his business transactions was encompassed by occasional visits to the bank where he deposited the coupons of some bonds which had been left him by his father, and the writing of the few modest checks in settlement of his small personal bills. From time to time since coming into his fortune he had found it necessary to realize on the maturity of a bond or two and reinvest the proceeds, a necessity which had caused him the utmost perturbation. He was terribly afraid he would lose something. One of the bank officers helped him over these hard places, but he always approached each similar problem with recurrent misgivings.

He lived in a moderate-priced respectable boarding-house where the food was execrable, but he did not complain. Once he had mildly objected to a noise made by a couple of young men in the room over his head, but the result had forever discouraged his further expression of dissatisfaction, for the young men had barked rudely at him, demanding to know: "Well, what the hell of it, anyhow?" Whereupon he had scuttled like a panic-smitten rabbit back to his warren.

Cadbury was indolent to the point of inertia, owing to an ingrowing timidity which robbed him of all initiative. As he grew older he became fatter, and his liver became upset through overeating, a result not to be wondered at when you realized that even moderate quantities of the food served at his boarding-house could hardly fail to undermine the strongest constitution.

So to his worries in regard to his money were added still more poignant anxieties concerning his health. From time to time he consulted Dunning, who had warned him about his habits—his indolence, his dietetic indiscretions, his purposelessness.

"Get your mind on something," said Dunning. "Eat less and take more exercise. Go into business. Why don't you invest part of your money in a store? You ought to have an interest in life that would pull

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Cadbury looked up at the rugged features of the phantom, the heavy brow, crowned with gray hair, the craggy, powerful nose, the firm, hirsute jaw. In the deep-set eyes he saw the sorrows of the ages.

you out of bed at an early hour, and the same hour, every morning, and keep your mind occupied with something besides yourself. You should ride a horse or a bicycle or a hobby. Cut out red meats and heavy starches, and fried things. Take one of these tablets before each meal."

Cadbury was too much afraid of losing money to make the prescribed investment, and absolutely lacking in confidence that he had the ability to succeed in business. The thought of going up against the antagonisms of commerce terrified him. As for exercise, he was thoroughly afraid of horses, and the idea of propelling a bicycle through the city streets or along country roads was a repellent one. It represented

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too much physical exertion. He took the medicine, but that was as far as he could be persuaded to follow the physician's advice.

Dunning, seeing the patient persistently disregard directions, was not surprised to observe a progressive deterioration in Cadbury's condition. The man was a lump. He hadn't force enough to follow the simple instructions which would keep him well. Finally when Cadbury called for advice after having stayed away more than a year, Dunning was not surprised to observe the superficial evidences of serious trouble. More thorough examination and test seemed to confirm the diagnosis, and without mincing words he told Cadbury he need hardly expect to live beyond another twelve months.

Cadbury's shocked acceptance of his verdict convinced Dunning that his previous warnings had never been taken seriously, and that the apparent finality of the dictum was like a smash from a lethal weapon. His irritation gave place to something like contrition. Poor Cad! He was built as God made him. He wasn't responsible. The physician knew that if he told any one of the first twenty acquaintances he met that Nate Cadbury was the victim of a fatal malady, that one would merely shrug, and say: "Really? 'S too bad. Say, Doc, we're thinking of putting you on the greens committee this year. You'll serve, won't you?"

Something like an impulse of pity had, therefore, led Dunning to make those brief, palliating remarks as his patient took a faltering departure. Poor old Nate! Shame he couldn't have amounted to something.

II

CADBURY reached the street and stood for a moment or two in front of Dunning's house, hesitating which way to go. Not that he was debating the matter. He was scared to a pulp and incapable of making even so elemental a decision.

The afternoon sun of an early June day shone in his eyes, which blinked feebly. It was a hot day, yet his flesh was cold. He perspired like a man in a Turkish bath. Fright had stunned out of him the ability to think, to act volitionally, to govern intelligently the functions of his various members. He tottered, and some one's hand clutched the gatepost to keep him from falling. It was his own hand, but it acted independently of his will.

He was going to die!

This assurance milling in his brain was not formed of words. It was an impression, a fear, an unorganized realization, a horror. It did not connote any of the accompaniments of death. The knowledge did not as yet start any sequence of reasoned thoughts. Cadbury was like a horse that is frightened, perhaps by a piece of blown newspaper, an unfamiliar odor, a sudden sinister noise. The horse runs away as hard as it can tear. It does not after that first impulse know what it is frightened about. It simply runs, mad with pure fear, fear of something, of nothing, of everything.

Cadbury ran away; or, rather, his legs ran away with him. It made no difference where they ran or in what direction. They ran.

The horse, if he escapes self-destruction, having cleared himself of his vehicle, runs until he is forced by exhaustion to slow down. The light of acute fear dies out in its eyes, and it begins to see and recognize objects about it—houses, fences, telegraph-poles, trees. There is nothing about these to renew its delirium, and presently it slows down to a walk. Wearied, trembling, still taut with suspicion, it looks about and sees nothing frightful. Presently it stops, and goes on again and stops, and crops a mouthful or two of grass or leaves by the roadside. By and by it submits to the lure of a friendly voice or a conciliatory fistful of oats.

Cadbury ran until his spent muscles refused to run farther. He crumpled by the roadside, trembling, recovered somewhat, and ran again. His fear outlived his ability to run, which renewed itself for shorter and shorter periods. Finally the man ran no more, but walked on and on unsteadily. He was trying to get away from something—what? Death? No, for reason said this was impossible. He was seeking to escape fear, which rode upon his shoulders, unshakable, pitiless, goading.

The fear was intolerable, but not so intolerable when he kept in motion as when he stopped. So he kept on, ever more slowly, more unsteadily.

He had cleared the outskirts of Cataract and was in the country, proceeding along a road bordered with fields green with young grasses, with bushes of alder and small scrub trees. Sometimes he passed through short stretches of woodland, whose branches interlaced above him. In these shadowy places his fear roweled him the harder, and he quickened his steps.

Cadbury did not know or seek to know where he was. But his senses began to function a trifle more normally. His fatigue was operating to dull gradually his fear. He was like the runaway horse that awakens to recognize familiar objects as not inimical to life and limb.

Cadbury, then, plunging wearily along the country road, perceived houses, trees, fields, fences in their proper places. Everything about him was calm, ordered, as it should be. He only seemed different, alien, changed from what he had learned to regard as usual. Inevitably, then, this preponderance of the accustomed and accepted served to quiet and steady him. The world had not altered. A few brisk words spoken by Dunning had in no wise thrown out of line the gears of existence. It appeared that the cogs of the universe were meshing in the same old way.

So a kind of reaction set in, something like indifference. In his state of merciful apathy, Cadbury began to orient himself. He judged that he was four or five miles out of town, and this was—yes, the old Weldon stage-road, once a main traveled way before the building of the railroad or the rehabilitation of the more picturesque Hadley Mountain highway, where now passed most of the motor traffic.

Between horse-path and wheel-tracks grew tall grass and weeds. The road wound modestly amid small hills, across rickety bridges, and through ravines where the mud had scarcely dried and the ruts were deep in hardening clay. Pasture land and uncleared patches of scrubby white birch, oak and maple lay on either hand, with an occasional clump of thicker wood, and now and then a small farm, none too prosperous.

In the slowly clearing fog of his brain loomed the thought that it was time to find his way back to the state highway and its flanking trolley-lines. Cadbury did not welcome the idea of indefinite pursuit of this lonely, half-deserted road. By a drooping sun he presently distinguished between east and west, whereupon he decided that his way lay in the direction from which he had come. He turned about, and began wearily plodding homeward.

He had proceeded for perhaps half a mile when the sun abruptly retired beyond the edge of an exceedingly thick and opaque cloud; and almost simultaneously Cadbury heard the distant threat of a thunderstorm. He glanced timorously toward the frowning west, and was chagrined to realize its extraordinary blackness.

Cadbury dreaded thunder. If he had been in his boarding-house, he would promptly have taken refuge on his bed, which had heavy glass casters as insulation against lightning stroke. Now he sought to increase his speed, though he was too tired to do so noticeably. The storm-cloud spread athwart the west and crept upward toward the zenith with terrifying rapidity.

It would never to do stop under a tree. Cadbury believed that persons who did that were always struck. But already he could see long, saw-edged flashes against the somber background, and the tumult multiplied in his ears.

A drop of rain splashed against his face. Ahead in the road he saw tiny dust-clouds raised by the impact of these first watery shots. He broke into a lumbering trot.

A few yards back from the road stood a house, unpainted, weather-blackened, oddly forbidding among the trees of a neglected orchard.

Nevertheless, it promised shelter and toward it bolted Cadbury. The first scattering drops had increased to a downpour which the man hardly escaped by hurling himself against the front door. Under his pressure, although he had meant only to shake it, the door gave upon rusty hinges and Cadbury sprawled in.

Here fresh misgiving possessed him, for he was suddenly aware that the dwelling was unoccupied and echoed uncannily to the noise of his entrance. He turned to escape, but the rain was now coming down in sheets and a violent thunder-clap followed close on the heels of a tremor of lightning, proving that the heart of the storm was close at hand. With the breaking of the tempest, darkness fell swiftly. Cadbury shrank back, fearing drowning almost as much as thunderbolts.

All his life he had believed that lightning follows drafts of air, and as the wind was now drawing briskly through the open door he was moved to shut it, whereupon he found himself in a thick and mildewed blackness like that of long-damp velvet.

He dared not grope ever so carefully about the room in which he had so abruptly become an unwelcomed visitor. There would be obstructions perhaps, or pitfalls. He stood quite motionless and wide-eyed there in the gloom until a flash of lightning shining through a window revealed to him the general shape and dimensions of the room. It was empty save for a quantity of débris scattered about the floor and a few objects which Cadbury took to be

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"You have—have a flower-garden?" she asked. "Did those come from your own bushes? They are beautiful—and old-fashioned, aren't they?"

discarded broken furniture. In the far wall yawned a brick chimneyplace.

Toward this he now made his way, hands outstretched, occasionally assisted by flashes. He managed to get hold of a backless and wabbly chair and sank upon it, leaning a shoulder against the wall. Outside the storm raged with a fury he had never in all his life seen equaled. So in this immediate terror was engulfed for the time the deeper fear due to the dictum of his physician.

Once he felt sure the house had been struck, so close came the crackling attack of the bombardment. He buried his face in his hands and trembled.

But the storm passed over slowly and the rumblings receded. The lightnings, hardly less vivid, lacked spite. There was no apparent lessening in the volume of falling water, however, and a strong wind sprang up which added to the driving smash of the rain an impact of irregularly repeated shouldering blows which seemed powerful enough to unseat the structure from its foundations.

And it was cold. Cadbury, not by any means drenched, still felt the dampness of that first rain on his clothing. He shivered as he sat there listening to the storm as if it were some malignant and destructive beast. If he only had a companion—even a dog, a cat, a flicker of candle-light, a fire——

Dully he felt in his pockets. Where he expected to find none at all, his fingers touched a single long-forgotten match; for Cadbury had always been afraid smoking would injure him. Now he sensed the gem-like value of that match. Its performance must be insured absolutely against failure.

Cadbury fell to pawing about, without leaving the immediate vicinity of the chimneyplace, for bits of wood, paper, cardboard, anything to serve as kindling. Having garnered a meager supply, he there in the dark whittled painfully with a dull penknife until he had a handful of fine shavings, which he laid on the hearth. Not until then did he strike his precious match.

Nursing its first feeble sputter to a robust little blaze, he communicated the flame to his prepared tinder. Instantly he had a fire as big as his hand, which lighted up flickeringly the whole room. This he carefully nourished with small broken bits of fuel. It crackled companionably and sent up a pungent wisp of smoke.

From this small beginning, which Cadbury engineered at the front of the hearth, he now transferred odd blazing fragments into the fireplace, adding more fuel as his fire gained strength. He saw that his supply was not abundant, for timidity confined him to that one room. Not for the world would he have gone exploring into the unknown chambers of this abandoned dwelling.

The flue, long unused and choked with damp soot, possessed a far from adequate draft. Consequently the smoke swirled into the room and soon had Cadbury's eyes smarting and watering. Such common sense as he could summon told him that only a much bigger fire would produce the requisite volume of heat to drive the dampness out of the chimney. He must then, perforce, heap on fuel with a prodigal hand. It sadly diminished his supply, and he found it necessary to break up a couple of the decrepit chairs.

However, the heat upon his back and legs was grateful. The fire crackled cheerfully. It was almost as good company as a dog would have been. Cadbury crouched close and sucked in its companionship. And as it gradually burned itself low, his heart sank. He made one last journey around the room for fuel, which he collected in a tiny heap by the fireside. When that was gone——

Among this collection of scraps a bit of flat pine caught his eye, by reason of a few letters printed on it by the brush of some shipping-clerk. It was apparently a part of an old goods case. Cadbury picked it up. The letters read:

"nderson"

That meant nothing to Cadbury. A part of a name, to be sure. Anderson? Very likely. The man studied the thing in the flicker of the diminishing fire with but a dull interest, as perhaps a marooned mariner might have studied the stock-market report in a newspaper two years old. What difference did it make what name——

Suddenly Cadbury shrieked, and threw the scrap of wood from him as if it had been a thing of poison or a bomb with a lighted fuse. The name wasn't Anderson,

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Forty-Five

By Donal Hamilton Haines

HAVING that summer reached the age of five-and-forty, Edwin Blenham made several discoveries, the most important of them with the aid of his physician.

"How old do you expect to be when you die, Blenham?" that gentleman had asked with the disconcerting abruptness peculiar to his profession.

"Seventy-five," Blenham told him promptly.

"You won't make it," the medico told him with an equal lack of hesitation.

Blenham went a little white, asked uneasy questions, and received definite answers. He left the physician's in the possession of certain disquieting facts. He was to let his business alone for at least three months and get him to the seaside without delay. He was to cut in two his daily allowance of tobacco, leave untasted most of the things he liked to eat, and was to take much exercise—which he abhorred.

It was during the first few days after his interview with his doctor that he began to stumble on other discoveries little less unsatisfactory. It had been years since he had let go of his business long enough to think about himself. Now that he sat back and looked at it, considering the number of dollars he had accumulated and the other dollars he might add to them before he died, he felt that his hectic money-getting had been little more dignified or profitable than the frantic efforts of a puppy to capture its own tail.

Letting go of his business was not the simple matter it might have seemed. His predicament was much like that of the small boy who tries to catch a ride on the back of a swiftly moving wagon. When he let go the business went on smoothly enough without him, but left him spinning and staggering with nothing to clutch to steady himself. He had forgotten how to play!

So, in no enviable frame of mind, he packed an inadequate supply of the wrong kinds of clothing in two suitcases, and set off for a fashionable seaside resort about as well suited to his need as an African jungle during the height of the fever season.

There are few spectacles more pathetic than the bewilderment of middle-age. Edwin Blenham was completely overwhelmed by the atmosphere of the great caravansary into which he stepped. For more than an hour after his arrival he hugged the sanctuary of his room, afraid to venture even as far as the corridor, where the presence behind a desk of an immaculate young lady in black and white terrified him.

It was nearly twenty-five years since he had been in such a place. A quarter of a century earlier he had taken his wife to a hotel at Niagara Falls on their wedding-trip. She had died within the year, and he had never visited a resort since. He had devoted all his time and energy to the manufacture and sale, in vast quantities, of steel tubing, and had never thought about amusing himself.

In a vague way he had supposed that his money would solve all difficulties. In the world where he was accustomed to move, it did so. He did not stop to think that his mere presence in the hotel implied the possession of considerable wealth, that the guests differed from each other simply in the degree of their affluence, and that he neither looked nor acted the part which he had come to play. He could not stand in the lobby and bellow, "Here, pay attention to me! I'm Blenham of Blenham Tubular, Inc.!" and yet there seemed no other way of impressing his individuality upon any one.

The pangs of hunger finally drove him from his lair to the great dining-room. Here his diffidence was aggravated by the discovery that he was almost the only man not in evening clothes. His gray business suit had cost eighty dollars but did not look it, and made him almost as conspicuous as he would have been in scarlet. He was thankful that the waiter had put him at a small table in a far corner behind many palms. Here, after he had ordered the sort of deleted meal which his physician had prescribed, he had time to take stock of the situation.

He was undergoing sensations which he had not known since childhood, when he had been transferred from one room to another in the school, and found himself suddenly set down alone among strangers who seemed as remote, unapproachable and unsympathetic as the beings of another world. He regretted that the sheltering bank of palms was not thicker and higher.

The arrival of his dinner steadied him a little, and allowed his sensations to arrange themselves in such fashion that he could analyze them. He was no longer merely a creature apart; he was beginning to understand the nature of his pariahdom. All the people around him were at ease while he was self-conscious, accustomed to their surroundings while he felt nothing but tingling and disturbing unfamiliarity, relaxed while he was tense. They were all at play and he was not.

By the time he had ordered his coffee—then remembered himself and substituted for it a nauseating cereal beverage which sent the waiter's eyebrows up and his own down—his state of mind had undergone a slight change. His sense of isolation had not diminished, but it had altered. Envy had begun to replace resentment. The ease of the men about him no longer irritated him; he desired to take one of them aside and find out how the trick might be learned.

Then quite suddenly and unexpectedly he found the root of his distress. What he envied them most was the companionship of the handsome bare-shouldered women. The only women he had known since his wife's death had been stenographers, clerks and tired-looking creatures who handed him his coat and hat. These bright beings whose voices and quick movements dominated the room were a species about which he had forgotten everything but the charm.

He began to feel horribly old. Every little wrinkle, seam and gray hair which his infrequent glances into his mirror had showed him, was suddenly exaggerated. He was forty-five! A slight but noticeable bare spot was beginning to show on the top of his head—although his optimistic barber bade him hope on that score—and his waistline was not what it should be.

This train of thought brought him to another discovery. By no means all the men in the room were young. Without turning his head he could count a dozen men who were certainly much older than himself—yet gay and animated as so many wrens. He sighed, staggered the waiter by the munificence of his tip, and rose slowly from the table. Arrived at his own room, he made the first step.

"I want," he said into the mouthpiece of his telephone, "the best tailor available to be in my room at ten to-morrow morning."

"Yes sir," replied the obsequious young man on duty, and put a small esoteric mark against the name of the man in 811.

Blenham spent a lonely evening on the hotel porch, and it is to be feared that he exceeded his quota of cigars, though doubtful that they hurt him under the circumstances.

Promptly at ten o'clock the next morning there came to his room an immaculate youth, whose manner lay somewhere between that of a floor-walker and a prince in exile. To him Blenham shamelessly exhibited the clothes he had brought.

"What shall I do with them?" he asked.

The immaculate youth gave them a single fleeting glance. "I should remove all marks of identification and drop them out the window," he answered.

"Get out your tape and samples," ordered Edwin, who liked direct and uncompromising methods.

In one of Blenham's battered bags the youth carried away the most presentable of his patron's clothes, and until they had been returned, pressed and furbished, Blenham sat in his pajamas. But that night he dined in his room.

During the brief period that he had to wait for his clothes (even a hard-pressed tailor will be swift at a price!) he devoted more time to introspection and raw philosophy than he had ever done in his life. He nearly forgot that there were such things as steel-mills, and gave himself up to the study of the species to which he seemed to have become a sort of appendage. From various points of vantage he

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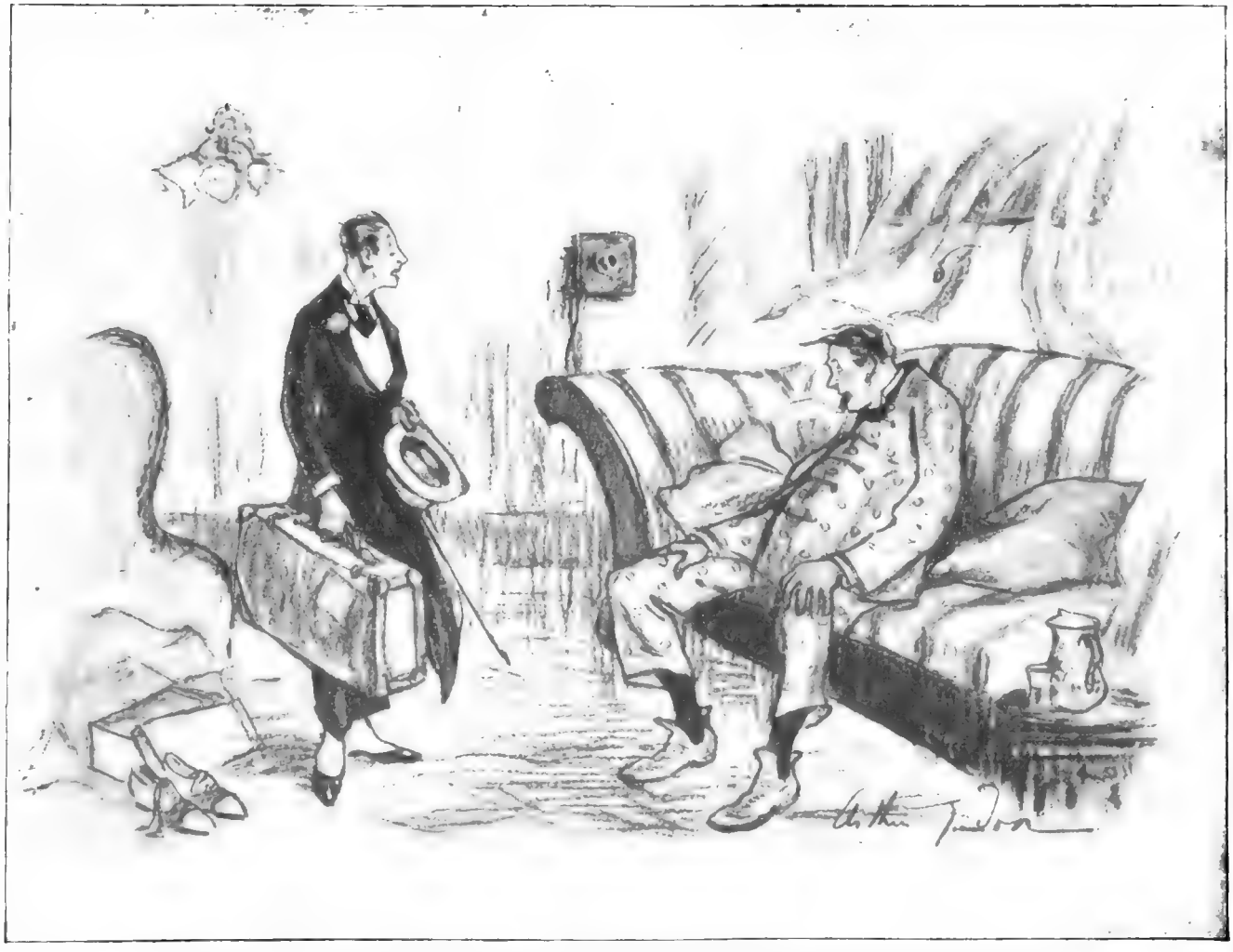

Promptly at ten o'clock the next morning there came to his room an immaculate youth whose manner lay somewhere between that of a floor-walker and a prince in exile.

watched the activities of his fellow creatures. He observed them all in the possession of something which he did not have, and which was evidently won only through much contact with others. As he watched, his desires grew.

"When I get the clothes for it," he told himself, "I'm going to get into this!"

When he descended to dinner in evening dress for the first time, he felt as though he had passed through a preliminary ordeal and was no longer completely at odds with his surroundings. He was a little disappointed to find that there was no change in the manner of his waiter. He felt now that the row of palms which screened him had ceased to be a protection and become a barrier.

His meal finished, his dress clothes appeared to have lost a good part of their value. They were of no particular use for lounging about the porch or walking upon the huge promenade which bordered the ocean, and yet these were the only things that Blenham had to do. Apparently all the other men who had dined in evening clothes had done so with the knowledge of other formal activities to come.

Tiring of his magnificent and comfortless solitude he went to his room, and amused himself by trying on his other clothes. They did not wholly suit him. They were very beautiful and they fitted perfectly, but they were not the sort of garments to which he had been used. The only ones which really pleased him were the lightweight tweed knickerbockers. He liked the freedom of the baggy trousers, and his mirror told him that if his calves approached the danger-mark of pudginess they no more than approached it, and looked very well in golf-stockings.

But like his dress clothes, the garments were of no use in themselves. There were two things for which he could wear them: golf and riding. Both these activities were exercise with a vengeance. Blenham considered them as twin evils and chose golf as the lesser, never having either sat in a saddle or handled a club.

The next morning, considerably comforted by the assurance that he was perfectly dressed for the part, he inquired the way to the links (he called them "golf-grounds"!) of one of the hosts of uniformed youths who thronged the lobby.

"Your sticks, sir?" inquired the youth, having set Edwin upon his ways.

"Sticks?" repeated Blenham uncertainly.

They hung for an instant, each staring at the other in blank incomprehension; then the man understood.

"Oh," he said, "I haven't any. Get 'em out there, can't I?"

The boy was somewhat vague on this point, and accepted Blenham's quarter as though doubting its authenticity.

Arrived at the links he suffered a partial lapse into his early terrors and diffidence. Here again was that atmosphere of complete assurance on the part of everybody else, that feeling of utter loneliness on his. The links themselves were crowded with tanned men and women. In his own mind Blenham's ignorance of the game assumed terrific proportions, became a shameful thing to be hidden rather than confessed. But for his knickerbockers he would have fled; their slender comfort gave him courage enough to find a seat on the porch of the club-house and order something to drink. Here he sat cursing himself for a poltroon, and reflecting that sitting in the shade and drinking alcoholic beverages was hardly the strenuous exertion which his doctor had ordered.

At this point in his meditations it was fated that Edwin Blenham should look up, and straight into the eyes of another gentleman sitting in gloomy solitude at the far end of the porch. Between them were tables, groups of chattering people and the swift forms of darting waiters, yet Blenham's glance not merely went straight to the other solitary figure, but read it with a quick intelligence born of his own tribulations.

This other figure was a round gentleman of middle years, whose ruddy countenance looked as though its habitual expression were much more cheerful than the one he wore at the moment, and who seemed vaguely dissatisfied with what he found in his tall glass.

Swayed by an impulse not to be either explained or resisted, Blenham rose, threaded his way across the porch—carrying

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his drink with him—and dropped suddenly into a chair at the other man's table.

"I've come," was his abrupt explanation, "because I've an idea that you and I are in pretty much the same boat."

The other stared at him in amazed gratitude. "Good Lord!" he ejaculated. "You're the first human being—among which I don't include clerks and bell-boys—who's spoken to me in the four days I've been here!"

Blenham nodded in solemn sympathy. "I know," he said with feeling. "What's wrong with us? Are we too old?"

The other sniffed. "Old!" he protested. "I'm forty-five."

"So am I," said Edwin, and they looked at each other with quickened interest.

"On the strength of that," declared the stout man, "we must have a drink."

They did so, then made mutual confessions which proved that Blenham's suspicions of a common lot had been well founded. The stout man was one Henry O. Burke of Akron, Ohio, and behind his seaward pilgrimage, too, there loomed the uncompromising figure of a family physician.

"The trouble with us," explained Burke, "is that we've stayed in our shells so long we are afraid to cut loose. The fear of ridicule: that's the bane of men like us, Blenham. Now I want no end to go and dance on the piers, but I haven't, simply because I'm afraid I might look like a fool."

"Why the dances on the piers?" inquired Blenham. "I hadn't thought about them."

Burke blinked at him in surprise. "I suppose you think the ocean and the climate and the hotel accommodations are the important features of places like this, eh?" he asked.

"Why, yes."

"They aren't. They're mere incidents. It's the women. At bottom, you know, that's why those doctor chaps sent us here. Stirring, that's the medicine we need, and we'll get more of it from the swish of skirts than all the ocean winds."

"I'd been thinking of golf," confessed Blenham, looking regretfully at his neatly hosed legs.

"Don't do it," advised Burke soberly. "It's a waste of time."

"But I need exercise," argued Edwin.

"More exercise in an evening's dancing than in four days' golf," insisted his companion. "And now that we've found each other we'll get back our nerve. Now that I've got a friend I can be the very devil of a Lothario, see if I can't!"

SO THESE two men with growing girths and graying hair went with considerable show of confidence in search of a youth not so much lost as neglected. They strolled, bathed, golfed a little (due largely to Edwin's secret vanity of his calves!) and took dancing lessons of a slim young lady who would have been amused at their heavy cavortings had she not seen so many more like them—and worse.

After the seventh of these lessons, from which they emerged perspiring with fervor one July afternoon, Burke declared that they were ready.

"To-night," he announced, "we'll descend on the piers and show some of those young squirts we're not as old as we look."

"But I don't know anybody," objected Blenham.

"You will," Burke replied confidently.

At the crisis, however, Blenham hung back. He entered the great pavilion on the pier, which ran hundreds of feet out into the ocean, with a feeling of high adventure which sustained him until they had paid their money and passed through the wicket; then he collapsed like a pricked balloon and fled.

From his safe retreat in the second row of spectators he watched Burke with mingled admiration and awe. The gentleman from Akron had lost all diffidence. Peering discreetly from behind a post, Blenham saw him first in easy conversation with several men, lost him for a little, saw him again bowing before a group of women, then actually essaying the dangerous navigation of the polished floor, his arm about the waist of a tall light-haired girl who, Edwin thought, did not look exactly overjoyed at her situation.

THE immediate effect of this spectacle upon Blenham was a thrill of admiration, followed by a deep conviction of his own cowardice and a sudden fierce determination to go and do likewise. But his cooler judgment held him motionless, and while he hesitated his ardor faded. He reflected that as a matter of hard fact Burke was dancing vilely, and that he would probably do even worse. Horrible visions of himself and some woman crashing down upon that slippery floor flashed before his mind, and he shrank shuddering behind his post. All that the slim young lady had taught him in those seven expensive lessons had gone completely from his mind.

Presently he observed his friend mopping his face and searching the room with a sharp eye. An even livelier terror gripped him, and his retreat was swift and masterly. Had Henry Burke possessed the eye of a hawk he could hardly have discovered the craven's withdrawal.

Outside the hall was a vast railed space where the dancers went to cool themselves, the men's cigarets glowing in the darkness, the women's light draperies blowing in the night wind from the sea. Here Blenham sought refuge, watching for Burke's appearance with an uneasy eye. Every time that the music struck up and he found himself still undiscovered, he drew a long breath of relief, then called himself a coward and flung his cigaret angrily into the sea. Here was offered the very thing he had sought, and he hid like an embarrassed schoolboy while Burke was already riding on the very crest of the wave.

"And he's fatter than I am and looks older!" he muttered hotly. "What's more, I don't believe I'd look so much like a woodchuck dancing."

From time to time, through the open sides of the pavilion, he caught glimpses of his late partner in solitude. Burke was dancing with an unflagging persistence. His partners were many and varied, but they had a single trait in common—youth. As dance succeeded dance the man from Akron became redder of face, damper of brow, but his spirit seemed undaunted, his flow of speech undiminished. At moments the sight of Burke and the shame of his own defection impelled Blenham to return, but always something held him back, although after the manner of men who have run away, he pretended that he was going to finish just one more cigaret.

In time, however, he gave up this hollow pretense, found himself a comfortable seat where he was well hidden, yet commanded a view of the floor, substituted a long and satisfying cigar for the half-smoked cigarets with which he had been littering the Atlantic, and was presently thinking about the manufacture of steel tubing and other pleasant matters.

From these reveries he was aroused by women's voices so close to him that he gave a start of surprise. Half starting to his feet, he discovered that the speakers were sitting inside the hall, but facing one of the openings directly in front of him. They were not ten feet away from him, but the deep shadows made him invisible as long as he did not move—and Edwin sat very still.

"Have you ever seen such a bore?" demanded one of the voices, and an eager chorus replied that they had not.

Cautiously moving his head, Blenham saw that the questioner was the blonde girl with whom Burke had danced first. He shuddered slightly as the girl continued—

"Why is it that so many men never begin making fools of themselves until they're fat and forty and then try to make up for lost time?"

"I could forgive him if he could dance," said another of the group. "Just look at my slippers!"

"It's no wonder he can't dance," put in a third. "He's so busy conversing."

"It strikes me," came a new voice, "that you children are being extremely uncharitable. Here's a poor solitary man wearing himself to a shadow to give you a good time, and you——"

This attempt at defense got no farther, being drowned in a laughing but none the less spirited chorus of protest. When the clamor had ceased one of the girls asked—

"Do you think there's any chance of the creature going home early?"

"I do not," the fair-haired girl answered decisively. "In fact, I think the evening is likely to grow worse rather than better."

"Why?"

"Because," she explained, "Mr. Burke has a companion-piece somewhere about who will doubtless prove older, fatter and generally more odious, and who will be inflicted upon us as soon as Mr. Burke can find him."

HAD a section of the pier given way at that moment and dropped Edwin Blenham into the salt sanctuary of the Atlantic, he would have counted himself fortunate, although he was no swimmer. He was looking wildly about for an avenue of escape when a heavy hand fell on his shoulder, and a familiar voice boomed in his ear—

"Deuce take it, man, where did you drop to? Been hunting for you everywhere. Come along, I've fallen right into a basket of peaches!"

There are crises for which no adequate forms of speech exist, moments at which human ingenuity fails completely, the soul shrivels and the body becomes a frail and broken reed. Edwin Blenham, with the very fibers of his being crying out in agonized protest, suffered himself to be led off without uttering a word, cringing before the approaching ordeal as cringes the patient when the dentist's drill begins

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For the first time since his arrival at the seaside he squared his shoulders and unconsciously strove to look his best.

its fiendish humming, yet incapable of resistance or speech.

He found himself bowing inarticulately before the same women to whose comments he had just been listening, heard Burke's voice merely as a far, faint roaring in his ears. He could not look them in the face. It seemed to him that he stood there motionless and silent for hours, his uncommitted crimes evident to all, an object unworthy even of pity.

Then out of the hazy mass of faces and figures before him there appeared a pair of brown eyes looking straight at him, and in them he read sympathy as well as amusement. Instinctively he knew that these eyes belonged to the woman who had tried to come to Burke's defense, and that in her he had found a friend who might rescue him from a situation becoming more intolerable with every slow-passing second. Even before he saw the rest of her face, he spoke desperately to those pitying brown eyes.

"I don't dance," he heard himself saying, and saw with infinite relief that she was moving her skirts that he might sit down beside her.

"It's such a pleasure to discover a man who doesn't dance and is willing to confess it," she said gratefully. "In these dances most of them insist on dragging one about, fondly imagining that they are dancing."

Blenham was hardly in shape yet for intelligent conversation, and she seemed to know it, for she chattered gaily on, compelling him to nothing save those polite monosyllables which marked the present limit of his abilities, and giving him time to look at her.

She was some years older than the other members of the group of girls who had been turning down their pretty thumbs upon the luckless Burke. Her figure was a trifle matronly, and there were some threads of gray in the brown hair which matched her eyes. It could be understood that the predatory Burke might have overlooked her, but a second glance led one to question his taste in having done so.

Presently, after a few quick sidelong glances at him, she set Blenham talking. Within a few minutes he was giving her most of the reasons for his presence at the seaside. Another ten minutes and she was listening with much show of interest to an able, but not exactly exhilarating, description of the steel-pipe industry. He talked eagerly about this and kindred matters, forgetting everything except the intelligent brown eyes into which he might look from time to time, until he suddenly realized that people were beginning to leave the hall.

"Don't these affairs close very early?" he protested.

"There is a sentiment in favor of stopping at midnight," she answered with a faint smile.

Blenham looked at his watch, and his jaw dropped. "I've been talking to you for two solid hours!" he exclaimed blankly.

She nodded, her eyes sparkling. "Your genuine amazement would win you pardon even if you had bored me, which you haven't," she told him.

"But you might have been dancing," he protested.

She shook her head. "The wise chaperon eschews dancing, Mr. Blenham," she explained—"or risks ruining her hard-won prestige."

But he was still far from easy in mind. "I've done nothing but talk about my infernal business," he persisted.

Again she nodded, smiling. "Yes," she admitted, "I probably know more about steel pipe than any woman here, and I'm rather proud of the attainment."

"Really?"

"Really!"

Then there descended upon them a swarm of chattering people. Blenham found himself shaking hands with several men, strove to keep his place beside her but was swept aside, lost her completely, and came presently to himself striding toward the hotel beside Burke. The latter was talking blithely, had evidently been talking for some time, although Edwin had not known it.

"—simpler in the world," he was saying breezily. "Knew that fellow Voorhees well enough to say 'How d'ye do?' and dropped just the gentlest hint that I was at a loose end and wished I wasn't. After that it was plain sailing. But why the deuce did you hide and then spend all your time talking to the chaperon after I found you? Why didn't you dance?"

"Headache," lied Edwin, who lied very badly.

"Headache my aunt!" scoffed the Akronite. "You lost your nerve."

"You were busy," Blenham suggested to change the subject.

"I was," Burke answered complacently, "and I shall be busier. I flatter myself that I'm rather solid in certain quarters."

Blenham, thinking of the conversation he had overheard, held his peace. They sat down on the porch of the hotel for one more cigar. Midway of it Edwin asked suddenly,

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"Party hell!" snapped Burke. "They ditched me."

"By the way, what was the name of that girl I was talking to?"

"Girl?" repeated Burke. "Oh!—Mrs. Turner?"

"Married?"

"Widow."

"Ah!" and Blenham resumed his cigar with a seeming increase of enjoyment. After an interval of silence Burke rose with a yawn.

"Full day to-morrow," he remarked. "Guess I'd better turn in."

"What's to-morrow?" inquired Blenham.

"Why, the beach-party. Don't tell me they didn't ask you!"

"They didn't."

"Well, you've nobody but yourself to blame. You had your chance to get into things and wouldn't take it. However I sha'n't have any trouble in fixing it for you."

"Don't bother," Blenham said shortly.

He slept late the following morning, and breakfasted with pencil and paper beside his plate. His lecture on his business the night before had stirred his brain to action, brought to life a brand-new idea which wanted a deal of thinking over. He took his papers onto the porch with him after breakfast, and became so engrossed in what was growing under his hand that he was astonished to see people trooping in to luncheon. He decided that in view of his late breakfast he didn't want any, and stayed where he was.

He was finally interrupted by the appearance of Burke, gorgeous in trousers and waistcoat of dazzling whiteness and a blue coat.

"Well, I'm off!" exulted the Akronite beaming. "Sorry I couldn't fix it for you, but there hasn't been a chance. I'll look out for you in the future."

Edwin gave a grunt, and watched Burke out of sight as the latter strode off with an air of expectant gaiety. Then he continued to stare thoughtfully at the spot where the panama-topped figure had vanished. He felt a little resentful. Here was Burke clawing and clutching his way out of the solitude in which they had found themselves, while he was worse off than ever. They had called Burke an old bore, but they had invited him to their frolic, while they had forgotten Blenham's existence. Well, there was always business, and he picked up his pencil with a sigh.

It was some time before he looked up, and when he did so his glance fell upon the agreeable contours of Mrs. Turner, who sat a few feet away in a big rocker, in her lap an open book which she was not reading. She turned her head at the sound of his slight movement.

"I was going to let you ignore me ten minutes longer," she said.

"I didn't know you were there," he protested hastily. "I didn't even know you were staying at this hotel."

"And yet," she informed him, "I have been here since the day of your arrival, and my seat in the dining-room is not twenty feet from yours."

Blenham said nothing, but his expression was that of a man who has just been told that he has missed his steamer.

"I have decided, Mr. Blenham," she continued, "that somebody ought to look after you."

It had been years since there had fallen on Blenham's ears any speech that had sounded half so pleasant, yet he could only say, "Why?"

"Because, for a man here on his doctor's orders, your behavior has been most culpable. Do you know what you have done?"

"No."

"You have sat in the same chair for four hours working like an underpaid clerk, and smoking at least six villainously black cigars. And now your head aches, your eyes are tired, you feel very seedy, and are vaguely regretting your neglected luncheon."

Blenham was so impressed by the truth of these accusations that he lost sight of the fact that she had confessed to a rather close observation of his activities.

"As combined penance and cure," she went on, "you may go and get your hat and then take me for a long walk."

He obeyed with exemplary promptness, and they left the porch together.

"No," she decided as she saw him instinctively feeling for his cigar-case, "not until after dinner, but if you like you may

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The Child-Actor Grows Up

By Alexander Woollcott

WHILE it is true that many, if not most, of the successful players of our time first trod the boards as youngsters, it would be reckless to account for their later success entirely, or indeed at all, by their early training. That would be mixing up heredity and environment in their usual hopeless jumble. It is perfectly true that Mrs. Fiske and Maude Adams were fairly carried on to the stage (kicking violently, no doubt, *en route*), but it is rather in the reason why they happened to be hanging around the theatre at so tender an age that you must look for the real explanation of their subsequent triumphs. They were available for a flying start on their careers because they came of stage folks. They were *born* actors both.

But you certainly can not say that all the kids who traipse importantly through our comedies will grow up into skilful players. Indeed, they are more likely to grow up into successful architects and bricklayers, or unsuccessful architects and bricklayers, as the case may be. For when Mr. Belasco solemnly avers that there is never any reason to suppose a child of the theatre will mature into a successful player, he is simply repeating in his oracular manner what every old wardrobe mistress and scene-shifter regards as gospel. It is a moss-grown tradition of the theatre that, whereas some obscure and unnoticed miniature mummer may become the Bernhardt or Ellen Terry of her day, any outstandingly precocious and successful child-player is doomed to failure and eventual banishment.

So when you see a little golden-haired fairy of six making off with all the honors of a scene, and you note admiringly that the grown-up actress with her at the moment is wearing a smile of resolute benignancy, as who should say: "Isn't she a perfect little dear?"—the chances are that the lady is really saying to herself: "I wish some one would bounce a brick off this brat's bean," and comforting herself with the thought that the little devil's legs will soon lengthen out and enforce retirement to a nunnery.

It is because of that tradition that fond stage-mothers grow worried and nervous when their little ones shine too suddenly.

Photo by Abbe

Helen Hayes is a marvel at eighteen. What will she be at twenty-five—great or nothing?

It is true that Josef Hoffman gained in power with the years, but where, oh where, are the latter-day writings of Daisy Ashford? It is an anxious time when the infant phenomenon begins to grow spindly, a harrowing moment when a boy-actor betrays evidence of being about to shave. For then comes the period of doubt. Will they be the rare, rule-proving exceptions, destined to cross it safely and emerge all the better equipped for their years of familiarity with the footlights? Or will they lose then and there for all time their seeming aptitude for the stage?

No wonder the watching parents worry, for the tradition of such failure is strong in the theatre. After all, they ask, where are all the perfect little dears of yesteryear? Where, for instance, are all the children who, succeeding to the knees of Jefferson through many, many seasons, played *Derrick* and *Meena* in "Rip Van Winkle"? Mrs. Fiske is one, to be sure, but where are the others? What has become of all the *Cedric Errols* for whom so many ruffled collars were faithfully laundered a quarter of a century ago? Well, there's Wallace Eddinger, of course; and if you must know, there's Eva Tanguay, for it is undeniably true that the rambunctious Eva was formerly slim and calm enough to tour the country as the insipid hero of Mrs. Burnett's sugary-snobbery story. But where are the others? Where are the *Edithas* of "Editha's Burglar"?

What has become of all the youngsters who have roamed aboard the pirate ship in "Peter Pan"? Miss Adams herself must some time wonder, for at each revival, when the company was reassembled, it would always be found that the last lot had outgrown their rôles. Where, for instance, are all the *Lizas* who, one each season, used magnificently to order up the curtain of that dear Barrie comedy? One of them, to be sure, has lengthened out into Anna Wheaton, but what has become of the rest? Really there come to mind only three genuinely celebrated child-actors—celebrated, that is, *as* child-actors—who now, in the days of their maturity, are living up to those first reputations. Can you think of any besides little Minnie Maddern, Master Wallie Eddinger, and Master Donald Gallaher? Little Minnie Maddern became Mrs. Fiske. The Eddinger boy became the Eddinger man, who was the jealous fellow in "The Boomerang," and is now the star of "Wedding-Bells." Gallaher shows up several times a season in various Broadway productions.

For such as these, for the one in a hundred to cross the line, it is the period of first emergence that is most trying, most anxious. For even when the young actor has shown that the power has survived his adolescence, he finds it difficult to convince any one that he really has grown up. He may be twenty-four and have a couple of child-actors of his own, impatiently biding

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their time in the nursery up-town, and yet there is a long period when he can not for the life of him look older than sixteen while he is on the stage. Both Gallaher and Gregory Kelly (the *William Sylvanus Baxter* of Tarkington's "Seventeen") still suffer a little from this lingering boyishness, this hang-over of adolescence.

The protraction of this interval can be explained a little by the fact that the necessary grease-paint obliterates the dawning evidences of maturity in their faces. Then, too, they are handicapped by the fact that all audiences think of players as younger than they look. Poor old Henry W. Audience has heard so many actresses of forty-eight refer in their plays to their approaching twenty-seventh birthday, so many sixty-year-old *Hamlets* learn from the *First Grave-Digger* that they will be thirty come Michaelmas, that at every performance he indulges in some unconscious mental arithmetic. "Let's pretend," he says to himself, and subtracts about ten years apiece from every one in sight. The habit is so fixed that an actor of twenty-five looks to him like an obstreperous *Willie Baxter* who ought to be packed off to boarding-school at once.

Gallaher, Gregory Kelly, the various Tobins and lovely Helen Hayes, are all visible now in various stages of this anxious emergence. Little Miss Hayes is the one most generally suspected of genius, and Gallaher the one who has most definitely crossed the borderland into accepted maturity. He is younger than Kelly, who, however, has carried far into his twenties an incorrigibly boyish and uncertain voice.

Kelly would seem to be the more expert player, but Gallaher the less limited and more richly dowered.

It has been interesting to watch Gallaher grow up in the theatre. Most of us have seen him off and on for years. He has played scores of rôles here and in London. You may remember him as Sarah Crewe's pampered neighbor in "The Little Princess," or you may remember him as the boy with Maxine Elliott in "Her Own Way," whose shrill clamor for more ice-cream lingers still in the memory. Then—well, there was the boy in "Alias Jimmy Valentine," and again the boy in "Snow-White," and after that some negligible betwixt-and-between performances.

Then one night, in the fourth act of a peculiarly paltry melodrama called "The Silent Witness," an unobserved young man of twenty walked around the corner of a desk and blazed up in such a flame of passion that the audience caught fire, and all the other players in the piece were shown up in the light of his playing as painted cardboard puppets, long since forgotten. As boyishness and physical likeness were no part of that startling success, it may be said that Gallaher crossed the line that night. Only this season, in a dreadful piece of rubbish called "Those Who Walk in Darkness," he played a husband and got away with it.

It is worth noting that from the time when he was four, Gallaher has supported his family, worked hard, and yet, in between times, done enough concentrated studying to outstrip his average contemporary in the dubious benefits of mere schooling. He has also managed to lead enough of an outdoor life to be a alarming husky in times of stress. His going on the stage in the first place was accidental. His father died when he was three and his mother, a girl of twenty, came on from the Middle West to look for a job, bringing her sister and her baby with her. The sister found employment as a "walking lady" in some company and the mother got a job in a store. But the store burned down, and in some theatrical boarding-house off Union Square she and her baby were stranded.

It so happened that just when things were beginning to look very black indeed, a woman in that boarding-house brought tidings that Sol Smith Russell was looking for a hurried substitute for a little chap in his company who had been taken ill. "The Poor Relation" was leaving town for a long tour, the youngster would be put in charge of a mother in the company, it would mean a long separation. Also it would mean bread and butter. Young Mrs. Gallaher tearfully parted with the wage-earning infant Roscius for the rest of the season, but after that she accompanied him on his every tour, watching always over one whom the theatre had claimed unmistakably.

The four Tobin children, a quartette of baby-actors very useful as such some years ago, also vanished from sight during the long-legged, voice-changing period, but this season found the older boy in Yale, the younger boy hanging around as an understudy, the younger sister venturing out in sub-deb comedy, and the older sister, Genevieve, unfolding at seventeen like a fragrant rose in the becoming setting afforded by "Palmy Days."

But the wonder of the season is none of these. It is Helen Hayes, an extraordinarily gifted and skilful actress who is just eighteen. Her "technique" is so remarkable that older and more famous actresses sit open-mouthed and wonder where and how she learned to do it. Helen Hayes comes from Washington, where at seven she was the pet pupil of a dancing-school, and so much admired that before long she was engaged to romp about the stage in some Lew Field's production. Then followed nearly a decade of inconspicuous novitiate. She was seventeen when quite suddenly she emerged from that obscurity to irradiate the Gillette production of Barrie's "Dear Brutus" at the Empire in New York. Close on the heels of this success came her still more conclusive triumph this season as *Cora*, in Tarkington's "Clarence."

All this adulation, all these flattering bids for her art, all the reckless predictions of future triumphs, have come to this girl at eighteen. Most people think the world lies at her feet, that only her height—she looks to be no more than five feet—can bar her from all of the great rôles of the theatre. Some there are, however, who wonder if her triumph has not come too soon, if she can carry into her twenties the charm and the power of her teens. At eighteen she is a marvel—no less. What will she be at twenty-five? The Maude Adams of her day, or an obscure and happily married woman, unknown to fame? In 1926, shall we all be besieging the box-office of some Central Park West theatre buying seats far ahead for Miss Hayes in "The Ray of Violet," or will one of us be saying: "That little Hayes girl who used to play in those Tarkington comedies—she was a wonder, wasn't she? I wonder what ever became of her?"

Herself

By Theodosia Garrison

WHEREVER she was was laughin' and singin' and story-tellin',
And kind words of the old friends, the like they were there to hear;
And always the bite and sup for the schuler that marked her dwellin'—
And herself with the step of a girl—and close to seventy year.

Eh, blue eyes, that I knew when they were young,
The sorrows of a long life could never dim their light;
Still I know there's laughin' and still a song is sung,
And still a kind word spoken where you may be this night.

Wherever she was was comfort and the all that she had for sharin',
The water she gave from the well was better than drink at a fair;
Never a daughter she had with the half of her wit and darin',
With the like of her rosy cheeks or the curl of her silver hair.

Eh, woman dear, who was joy to me so long,
There's many ran to greet you in the place of your delight,
And I think you do be sayin', between the mirth and song,
The kind word for one old friend who's missin' you this night.

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"My name," she added a little apologetically, "it is Paolina."

Paolina

By Edwin Balmer

Author of "The Indian Drum," "Ruth of the U. S A.," etc.

Here is a delightful story of love and business—of a romance helped on by hardware. Edwin Balmer, the author, one of the most popular writers of the day, is blessed with the real story-writing gift, and EVERYBODY'S is happy to announce that "Paolina" is the first of several stories by Mr. Balmer to appear during 1920.

THREE were at the breakfast-table, as there always had been but three since his sister, Marjorie, married five years ago. The family never had numbered more than four—his father, his mother, Marjorie and Jerry himself.

The table was just as he always remembered it—cool, formally set, spotless, and laid with the heavy, simple silver which had been in his mother's family for a hundred and forty years. True Colonial silver, not mere replicas of an old pattern; and the table was true Colonial. Men and women and children of his mother's family had sat about that table for five generations; a big, well-made, handsome table for a large family. And Great-great-grandfather Cappel had begot many children; the old Cappel Bible devoted a whole page to the listing: "Jeremy, Mary, John Edward, Faith, Ezra, Hope, Barnaby, Elizabeth, Jane, Constance, Esther, Gideon."

The father of that family, who had fought under Washington at Princeton and Trenton, and who lived to vote the Colony of Massachusetts into the Union, recorded in his own hand the names of fifty-three grandchildren, and four more were born to be listed in a younger hand. Five Cappels and two Howarths, the sons of Mary, fought on land in 1812; a John Edward Cappel, Jerry, who had gone to war with the tanks and fought in the Argonne drive, had been reported missing, and nothing was heard of him for several weeks; then it was known that he had been wounded and captured, but had escaped; he had completely recovered from his wound and was home again, safe and sound.

"But the terror of our waiting for word of you, dear, you will never know," his mother repeated fondly to him again this morning. "Hester was such a help to me through those frightful weeks; she's such a sweet girl. Did you have a nice time last night, dear?"

"Why, yes, mommy, of course," Jerry assured, not overconvincingly. "Hester" was Hester Seldon, who lived in the next block from the Lowneses; last night Mrs. Seldon had given a dinner-dance for Hester and in honor of the officers in their set who had returned from France. "It means in honor of Jerry Lownes," Evanston said; Jerry knew people were saying it, and he did not like it; for Hester and he, who had played together as children, were nothing more than good friends, though her mother and his were openly eager for them to marry. "And it's not Hester who's opposing," every one agreed; which made it more difficult for Jerry to discuss her.

"I am so fond of dear Hester," his mother added with the wanton tactlessness

Cappel, with his cousin Ezra Bard, Hope's son, ran off to sea and aided in the capture of the *Guerrière*. There were Cappels in the Blackhawk war and in both Scott's and Taylor's armies in Mexico. Cappels and Howarths and Bards and Fenwicks—Faith's grandsons—were judges and bankers and shipowners in Boston and Lynn and Salem and New Bedford in the forties and fifties and sixties. Eighteen of the family fought for Abolition; and four were killed. But though fourteen returned, and most of them prospered and married, the family seemed to cease having sons and daughters. When '98 came with its call of the President for volunteers, in all the family connection there was no man of age to respond; and 1917 had mustered only Jerry, the son of that Constance Esther Cappel of the fifth Boston generation who had married John Lownes of Chicago, and had moved to Evanston, Illinois.

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of a parent determined to bring about a match.

"Telephone, ma'am," Tony, the butler, announced, taking advantage of the silence while Mrs. Lownes waited vainly for her son to reply. "For you, sir, Captain Lownes."

"Who is it, Tony?" Constance asked sharply.

"Miss Henege, ma'am."

"Oh!" Constance said in her restrained voice, but she might as well have exclaimed, "I knew it; that awful person!" Yet she sat helpless while her son excused himself and went to the instrument in the hall where he conversed with Miss Henege for quite a quarter of an hour.

Jerry returned to the dining-room, flushed as he was likely to be after a long conversation with Maud Henege; and he was aware, from the glances which his parents bestowed upon him and then upon each other, that they had been talking him over.

"Jerry, you're not taking Maud Henege to the Blackstone to-night!" she confessed to overhearing.

"Why, yes, Mommy; why not?"

"But who'll be with you?"

"Oh, lots of her friends; we'll all be going together. We'll have a good time; don't worry."

"But Jerry!" his mother protested; what worried her, of course, was that he was likely to have a good time with Miss Henege; and there was another pause in their talk which permitted Tony to bring to the table the mail which had just come.

Most of it was for Mrs. Lownes, but Jerry had three letters; one from a classmate still in France; one in the sprightly, bold handwriting of Maud; and one typewritten and bearing the impress of an attorney-at-law of Salem, Massachusetts. As he finished his coffee, he looked over the note from Maud, while his mother stifled her desires to know what "that girl" could be writing about when she telephoned so frequently.

He read the French letter, and then opening the third these astonishing words confronted him:

By the will of the late Honorable Barnaby Enoch Gower of this city, I have the privilege of informing you that, except for a number of small bequests of personal articles and one bequest of five thousand dollars toward a local charitable institution, the entire estate of the deceased is bequeathed to you . . . the value of certain properties yet to be computed . . . may be estimated as totaling ten thousand dollars. . . .

A staid, careful signature corresponded with the name engraved upon the letterhead.

"Who in the dickens was the late Honorable Barnaby Enoch Gower?" Jerry asked curiously, looking up.

His father shook his head.

"Why Cousin Barnaby, of course, dear," Jerry's mother supplied. "He passed away in March; surely I wrote you."

"Maybe," Jerry said doubtfully, "but he's a complete surprise to me. Who's Cousin Barbaby?"

"Why, dear, he was—or rather his mother was—your grandfather's first cousin. She was a Howarth and——"

"But why has he left all his money to me?" Jerry cut short the threatened intricates of genealogy by which his mother traced the most tenuous trickle of Cappel blood to persons whom no one but a Cappel would consider related at all.

"Has he, dear? What was it?"

"Not much, maybe ten thousand," Jerry said. "But why should I get it?"

"Why, he was so interested in your going to war, dear; he heard about it and wrote me. He'd been in our war himself, you know"—Constance always referred possessively to the Civil War—"and he wrote me with his own hand about you when we all learned you were safe. Let me see."

Jerry handed the letter across to his mother, and nodded to his father, who glanced at his watch, asking, "Going down-town with me this morning, boy?"

JERRY went up to his room; when he was ready for the city the motor-car had not come about to the *porte-cochère*, so he delayed at his window looking down at the projecting side of the big, handsome house which was his father's and at the wide, perfectly kept garden bright with tulips and hyacinths, and with crocuses and violets peeping from under the shrubbery farther off near the edge of the smooth, flawless lawn.

That lawn was fairly old, even for Evanston, which was one of the earliest residence cities of the West. Forty or fifty years ago—Jerry could not keep the most frequently repeated items of family lore accurate in his head—grandfather Lownes had bought this land and built here; some of the gardens, though not the terraces in the rear and of course not the greenhouses, went back to the epoch before the great Chicago fire when his grandfather Lownes had his hardware and tool-store on State Street.

"Old Andy"—as he was familiarly called later—had been a big, bluff, none-too-well-educated man, a hard worker and a good Methodist. He was one of those merchants whom the fire of '71 had wiped out, with the effect of inspiring them to rebuild a wholesale instead of a retail establishment and to commence a general jobbing business throughout the West. As he prospered and his family grew, he pulled superfluous porches from his home, widening it by generous, hospitable wings and then by adding to the rear. He sent his sons east to college and his daughter to "finishing schools" and lived to see his son Henry marry a Boston Cappel and bring her to Evanston. So Henry, who succeeded to the business, inherited the home, too, which he remodeled inside, stuccoed outside, and proudly furnished with the Cappel heirlooms from Boston and New Bedford and Lynn.

Jerry could remember the handsome old mahogany and china and silver arriving every few years throughout his boyhood as some lonely Cappel or Howarth or Bard kinsman or kinswoman died with no younger relative nearer than his mother; then some began coming to Marjorie and, before he went off to war, bequests arrived for him from people whom he had not even seen.

As he stood in his room surrounded by heirloom furniture, Jerry was not so much thinking out his position as reviewing thoughts and feelings which had come to him at his introspections during the long, tedious waits between training and battle. If he was killed, who would all these family treasures go to; and what would the rest of his mother's kin do for a legatee? It had struck him as somewhat pathetic the way all these old, childless people clung to the idea of perpetuity through him; and it had seemed to him an almost grotesque commentary upon his civilization that the family of which he was brought up to be most proud—and which every one always admired and envied—was a dying family; run out, sterile or suicidal.

Also it was amazing how this dying stock imposed its views upon the younger and more vigorous strain. Grandfather Lownes had had four sons and four daughters; and Jerry had thought, in those quiet hours of thinking things over, that if his sister Marjorie had been a boy there would have been no Jerry. His parents had wanted a boy; and, having one, there had been no flaw in their satisfaction with their family until the war, so utterly unforeseen, had come to endanger their son. The shock to their security persisted in their eagerness to have Jerry married and with a son of his own.

But he must marry only a thoroughly suitable girl such as Hester, who would, in no manner and no hope, offend the restraints of the modern mansion of brick and stone which his father had raised a few years ago to replace the old, rambling, boy-and-girl-roomed family home. Henry and Constance Esther Cappel had built it with their own rooms wholly separate in the front; with one suite adapted for the proper care of one child, but with all the rest of the great house planned only for guests and entertainment. In it they expected Jerry and Hester to take up life just where they would leave it. So Jerry should have one child—perhaps two, if the first were a girl; both to be born in an operating-room in the Evanston Hospital, attended weekly in sickness and in health by the most expensive of the baby specialists, and put in the care of a trained nurse while Hester and her husband (Jerry was beginning to be unable to continue himself in the picture) permitted the minimum of interruptions to their country- and golf-club careers, their visits East, the opera and dinner-dances.

JERRY stopped himself on these imaginations abruptly; they weren't quite decent, he thought; but Marjorie, after being married five years, had decided to have a child; the little girl was born and Marjorie was "never going through such a performance again." Her remarks had made her husband feel like a brute; Jerry certainly did not envy him; and now, when any one asked him to think of marriage, he thought it through with a new manner of definite, determined thinking which he had learned in the war. Jerry was twenty-eight and no youth.

No one had asked him to think of marriage with Maud Henege; but, on the way down-town in the limousine with his father, he thought that through also. He was perfectly aware that what attracted him to Maud was her difference from Hester and his sister Marjorie and, yes, from himself, and from all the rest of the Seldon and Lownes "set."

Maud was an outsider, more than a bit crude and ignorant yet of matters which were simply second nature to Hester or Marjorie; therefore to go with Maud was to defy his parents and the life so completely arranged for him. This defiance

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"Vera careful!" Paolina warned gently and, at the most Stygian turn, a cool, smooth, steady little hand touched his and guided him.

was pleasant and diverting; but the trouble with it was that it was not true defiance. For while Maud was a crude outsider, she did not want to be; she wanted to be just as much like Hester and Marjorie as she could; and she was not identical with them now only because she did not know how to be. But if he married her, she would thereby instantly be of their set, and out-Hester Hester in all fashionable ideas.

The car stopped before the big Lownes building near the Chicago River, and Jerry said good-by to his father, and hunted up the particular Ford car which was his for going about the city. Before departing for a camp two years ago, Jerry had been going through the motions of working up through the different departments of his father's business. Of course he knew that he was not really working up; that however badly he did in all the departments, some day he would sit in his father's seat in the president's office; but he had humor and sporting blood enough to want to do as well as possible at his work; and now, following his return from the war, he was going through the motions of being a city salesman.

The city sales-manager had assigned him a perfectly good patch of territory on the northwest side of the city—an incredible, interminable plain of two and three and four story brick-and-wood dwellings and warehouses and machine-shops and planing-mills, intersected by the bebridged canal of the North Branch of the river, and by such marvelous, slanting thoroughfares as Milwaukee Avenue and Lincoln and Elston with mile after mile of food-shops, dry-goods and hardware stores, motion-picture palaces, soda and candy counters, pawn-shops, banks and lunch-rooms cutting through settlements of Greeks, Lithuanians, Swedes and Norwegians, Bohemians, Poles, Italians, Croatians, Germans and others beyond catalog.

It was in the hardware stores, of course that city salesmen for the Lownes Company were interested; Jerry had a complet card-index of them; and they were marke upon the map of his territory so that salesman could drive from one to anothe with the least loss of time and waste o gasoline and tires. He was completing with more faithfulness than success, hi first swing about the territory, and thi morning made two calls before ten o'cloc at stores on Milwaukee Avenue not fa from Division, making no sales at all at th first place, and selling his bill of goods a the second only on his war record; fo though Jerry made his calls under th name J. Cappel—that name meanin nothing at all to the hardware trade—th proprietor of the second store recognize him.

"Followed you all through the war, sir Always bought from your house. Se here, Captain Lownes!" and the proprieto

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pointed to the wall beside his desk, where he had posted up a newspaper print of Jerry with his head sticking out of a tank, and Jerry's champion abomination in the way of "write-ups" below it. "Proud to have met you personally, sir. Would you mind autographing this picture—your own name, sir, of course."

Jerry signed in exchange for the merchant's autograph upon an order-slip, and departed much ashamed of himself.

"A. Besippo" was the name at the top of Jerry's next card; the address was on a street strange to Jerry, but evidently in the neighborhood; next upon the card were symbols which informed him that Lownes and Company considered A. Besippo's credit fairly good, but limited; that he still owed the house a payment upon goods purchased ninety days earlier; then there was a notation of the character of his buying, with the remark that when last called upon A. Besippo himself was away at war, and to see P. Besippo. The final symbol warned Jerry to see certain correspondence of certain dates, but he had not seen it, so he went ahead without.

The district, Jerry observed as he drove his Ford slowly to avoid the many dark-haired, dark-eyed children playing in the strange street, was gay and bright for such a part of the city. The houses and stores were architecturally the same hopeless nondescript places which characterized the decades when Chicago was desperately sprawling out to furnish wall and roof for its crowding people; but here the dun and drab of the dusty paint were frequently relieved by vivid bands of color; brighter curtains bedecked blistered window-frames; and the shop-windows showed gaudier, more cheerful hues of cloth and trinkets; even a bakery-window became festal with a marvelous cake frosted in white and yellow and purple. There were many flowers on the sills, and through open windows came the thrumming of a piano, the shrill of a violin, and voices singing plaintive, vibrant melody. It was a resonant atmosphere in spite of the gray city dust, hanging like a haze in the hot morning air; where the sun glanced through it, the dust was golden, and the people hereabouts seemed to prefer the sunny side of the street with its yellow light.

"ITALIANS," Jerry said to himself, and, looking up, he saw the name of Arcangelo Besippo above a little hardware store next to a large candy and soda and fruit emporium upon a corner; so he stopped his car at the curb, and, gathering up his catalogs and order-book, entered the open door of the hardware shop and gazed about.

No one was in the store but a girl of eighteen, perhaps, or maybe twenty, Jerry thought as she came toward him from a desk in the rear where it was so dark that an electric light burned above the big ledger over which she had been bent. When she stepped into the sunlight, which was pouring through the window behind Jerry, she smiled, less at him, it seemed, than in joy at the sunlight. She ought to be out in the sun, Jerry thought; not in that yellow haze of city dust, but in some clean, cool, beautiful place with the deep, dark green of foliage about her, clear azure above and before her the marvelous blue of her native Mediterannean Sea. She made him think of Sicily and of Taormina, warm, vivid and calm; especially her soft dark eyes which gazed into his interestedly, then shyly, as she met his stare; and she looked away.

Jerry did not mean to stare, but he could not help it; she was so pretty and so beautifully formed; he watched her hand as she unconsciously rearranged an article on the counter between them; it was a wonderfully gentle, shy little hand with smooth, olive skin and perfect pink little nails.

"What is it?" she inquired, accenting each word the barest trifle.

"I want to see," Jerry said, "Mr. P. Besippo."

"Mr. P. Besippo?" she asked puzzled. "There is no P. Besippo here but—but me. My name," she added, a little apologetically, "it is Paolina."

"Paolina," Jerry repeated to himself, almost audibly. It seemed that he had never heard so pretty a name, certainly none so softly and so quaintly pronounced. She said it in the Italian way, stressing no one vowel more than another. "Then it must be you I would like to see," he said aloud, finding his business card.

HER slender fingers took it; she read the Cappel name without emotion, but the designation of the fact that J. Cappel was representing the Lownes Company brought a warm flush to her cheek and she looked up at him, her eyes filled with trouble.

"Oh, it is about that so big, that so terrible bill! But I can not; my brother, he will not permit me to pay you!"

"I'm not after the bill, Miss Besippo," Jerry assured hastily, desiring exceedingly to say Paolina or to hear her say it again. "I'm a salesman, you see. The old bill's all right. I came to sell you more goods."

"More?" Paolina exclaimed in frightened dismay. "Oh, do you not see?" she motioned about her. "I have not sol' the las'. So, it is all the troub'. You—oh, no, no, not you. You, I have never seen before. But the oth' gentleaman. He is so kind to me; he know I know so leetle, he explain so much, so well; so I buy when Arcangelo he is away; and, yoh seea it yoursel'. I do not sell and Arcangelo is so dam' mad. Oh, no, I dare not buy anything ever once more. But my brothera, he will seea yoh." And she turned away to a door which she opened into the confectionery store adjoining. "Arcangelo!" she called gently.

So A. Besippo not only had returned from the war, but was now present. Jerry had no longing whatever to see him.

Not that another indignant buyer—even one so dam' mad—gave him any particular quaver; no Arcangelo, in any mood whatever, could possibly be a good substitute for Paolina. Yet Paolina now was retiring to the rear of the store and Arcangelo was coming forward.

"Good morning, sir," A. Besippo greeted with firm belligerency. He was a good-looking man of less than thirty, Jerry thought, with skin darker than his sister's, with heavy black brows and an evenly trimmed mustache. He had a figure so well proportioned that it fitted almost perfectly the ready-made suit which he wore; it was a plain gray suit, in good taste. Indeed, Arcangelo's attire offended fastidiousness in no respect save the patently stiff white shirt-bosom buttoned inside his coat in which shone a large diamond stud. He wore on his coat the ribbon bar of the St. Mihiel-Meuse campaigns; Jerry himself did not do that, yet the wearing was not to be overcriticised. Jerry had not realized, until he found himself finding faults in Arcangelo's dress, that Paolina's had erred in no manner whatever.

Jerry stated his business and Arcangelo eased his soul of stored hatred for the house of Lownes. A. Besippo had been away serving his country; he had not had to go. He was married seven years and he had five children, all dependent; easily he could have got exemption; without having to say one word; indeed, he had to insist to go. But after Caporetto, and what people said about Italia, he was so dam' mad—so dam' mad, he repeated, and Jerry understood that Paolina, in using the word, had not intentionally sworn. Dam' was simply a part of the word mad, when Arcangelo's anger was involved. So A. Besippo had waived exemption and gone, leaving Faustina, his wife, and Teresa, her sister, in charge of the store on the corner, and his sister, Paolina, responsible here. What, then, had the house of Lownes done? They had sent a very devil of a salesman about to lie to and deceive Paolina and attempt to rob him; but the Madonna returned Arcangelo to his home and his business in time to stop the complete despoilment and prevent further payment upon the goods. Oh, Archangelo was so dam' mad! Did Mr. Cappel care to look about him and in the basement where were piled up crates which the Lownes Company refused to take back though unpaid for?

IT WAS easier to pay attention to stock on the shelves when Arcangelo was talking than when Paolina was; and Jerry observed that the cause of all the trouble seemed to be an abnormnlly heavy supply of aluminumware which Arcangelo had referred to feelingly many times. Apparently the salesman who had preceded Jerry had become convinced, and had argued to Paolina with fatal success, that no one now would buy anything else, though the fact was that proper appreciation of aluminum had not penetrated to these streets.

"Paolina!" Arcangelo called. "Now bring me the letters and show him the cellar!"

Paolina brought the letters from the Lownes Company, and Arcangelo's copies of his own which made perfectly clear how A. Besippo had been so dam' mad when first writing the house that the sales-manager had got too mad also and a most unfortunate *impasse* immediately had been established. Jerry better understood the presence of the symbol which had warned him to see correspondence before calling. He had been willing to take Arcangelo's word as to the stock in the basement; but if Paolina was to lead him to see it, that was a different matter. The stairway down was villainously dark, even after Paolina had switched on the light below. "Vera careful!" Paolina warned gently and, at the most Stygian turn, a cool, smooth, steady little hand touched his and guided him for a moment and then was gone.

The amount of stock sold that little girl certainly was disgraceful. Jerry himself was getting pretty dam' mad, not only at the salesman who had preceded him, but at the sales-manager. He'd like to fire

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Girls and men gathered about to listen to her; altogether too many for Jerry.

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them both; but Paolina, though overwhelmed anew at review of the full extent of her ruinous purchases, was blaming no one but herself.

"I did buy," she said to Jerry honestly. "I thought to sell it all. Arcangelo, he blame me, when you are not here. He know it so much my fault," she took the burden upon herself.

They were standing opposite each other under a dim, swaying electric bulb; and as she looked up at Jerry, he had an amazing, almost overwhelming, impulse to bend and kiss her. The factor of safety, he thought, had never been less within him.

"What does your brother say to you?" he demanded.

"When he is dam' mad at me?" Paolina asked. "How can I say?" And he saw her quiver a bit and step back.

"Look here?" Jerry challenged suddenly. "Has your brother ever struck you?"

"Me?" she said, her gentle eyes opening wider in wonder. "Why, Arcangelo he—how do you say—bring me up! I have no father or moth'."

"You mean he used to strike you?"

"When I deserve," Paolina said.

"Has he—" Jerry had to clear his throat and commence over again—"has he struck you because you bought this stuff?"

Paolina flinched a little as he stared at her, but she refused direct reply. "Somebody has come in," she referred to footsteps above. "I hav' to go up."

Jerry followed her, and at the dark turn groped, hoping for her hand again; but she did not give it now and they returned together into the shop. Arcangelo evidently considered that he had made his position wholly clear to the representative of Lownes & Company and he had disappeared into the emporium. Paolina advanced to fill local requirements of carpet-tacks and tinware.

"Paolina! Pa-o-lin-a!" a child's voice bewailed, and a troop of five and six year olds piled in from the street, clamorous, dusty and perspiring. A child, littler than the others, flung herself sobbing upon Paolina, and as P. Besippo picked her up and hugged her and kissed her, Jerry heard, "Letizia! Oh, *bambina mia . . . povera! . . . Carissima!*" and other Italian endearments and comforting extravagances until little Letizia sobbed no more. A doll—so it developed—had been broken, and in the baby's tragedy Paolina seemed so to have forgotten Jerry's business that she looked up at him sweetly but blankly, when he passed her on the way to the door. He saw she was trying to remember just what he had been saying to her; but he did not remind her, for he himself did not wish to remember.

He bent over little Letizia and experimented upon the child with the dubious remnants of his Italian, lasting over from a Sicilian visit following his graduation from Harvard seven years gone.

"Please tell the *bambina*," at last he begged Paolina, "that I will send her a doll as near like that as possible from the first store I can find."

"Oh, no, no, *signore!*" Paolina protested.

"Yes; do not buy another. I will!" he said positively. "*Addio, signorina!*" and he went out, more unsteady than he remembered being since he had recovered from his wound, and cranked up his car. Two blocks away he spied a promising shop-window and went in and, for the first time in his life, he personally selected a doll. He took quite a while about it, to make sure it had detachable clothes and the other proper accessories; then he paid extra for instant delivery to Mistress Letizia, care of Miss Paolina Besippo.

His fixed intent was to see his father's sales-manager and make him authorize the immediate acceptance of the unsold goods at A. Besippo's; but before Jerry returned to the Lownes Building two considerations changed his mind. The first, and less important, was that Jerry Cappel Lownes was playing the game of being a city salesman; and when he played a game he played it. Now a city salesman can not command a sales-manager; he must uphold his superior's decision with a customer and, if possible, scheme out some way for the customer to dispose profitably of his purchased goods. The second consideration was that such a scheme would certainly bring him into much more frequent association with P. Besippo than simply having the house take back the goods. So Jerry went home that night without saying anything to the sales-manager, but thinking very deeply.

HIS mother gave an informal little dinner two days later, whereat Jerry considerably astonished hostess and guests by suddenly demanding, apropos of nothing which any one had been talking about:

"I say, how do you cook ravioli? I mean in what sort of a dish?"

"Why, Jerry dear," his mother exclaimed, "we're not having ravioli; those are sweetbreads."

"I know," Jerry said impatiently. "But ravioli; you fry them, don't you? On frying-pans or griddles? Now *polenta*—you'd make that in kettles, wouldn't you?"

"Was the Blackstone featuring Neapolitan dainties last night, Jerry?" Hester gibed a bit acidly; for kind friends had informed her of Jerry's presence with Maud and her noisy set at the hotel the evening before.

But Hester got no jump out of Jerry; his mind was far from the Blackstone—about three or four miles northwest, where he was going to-morrow morning; for he had his scheme at last and he was absolutely sure it would be a winner.

It was; both from the practical point of view of A. Besippo and from the somewhat different standpoint of City Salesman J. Cappel. Jerry wrote the handbills and Paolina put into colloquial Italian the text which soon informed the housekeepers in the neighborhood that Lownes & Company, eager to introduce their excellent aluminum kettles, saucepans, frying-pans, griddles, etc., offered a prize of one hundred dollars in cash for the most deliciously cooked Italian dish prepared in an aluminum utensil purchased of A. Besippo; there was a second prize of fifty dollars, five of twenty dollars each, and twenty of five dollars. A contestant could choose her own dish—*polenta, ravioli, frittura;* anything. One representative of A. Besippo and one of Lownes & Company would judge all products offered and immediately award all prizes in cash.

They did so, most wonderfully agreeing; and the representative of the Lownes Company paid so fairly and so promptly that before the end of the week A. Besippo was reordering aluminum-ware and was eager for the continuance of the contest.

Jerry had gained much. At the first of the week, when he took her little hand upon parting, he said, "*Addio, signorina,*" quite properly and received her "*Addio, signore.*" Now he said: "*A rivederci,*" boldly and—more cautiously, for Arcangelo was forever popping in from the corner emporium—"Paolina!"

"*A rivederci, signorino,*" she said shyly; then Jerry would go out to his Ford with his heart lumped up in his breast so that it could hardly pulse. But there was now absolutely no danger of Arcangelo getting so dam' mad at the sight of aluminum-ware that he would punish Paolina for it; and all this had cost Jerry was three hundred and fifty dollars.

But, of course, tidings of the extraordinary cooking contest, under the published auspices of Lownes & Company, had to reach the house; so the sales-manager investigated and—as it was clearly Jerry's doing—he laid a report before Mr. Lownes with the result that the president summoned a certain city salesman to his office and gave him opportunity to explain.

"One of our men criminally oversold a little girl who was left in charge," Jerry related the circumstances of Arcangelo's going to war. "She couldn't sell it; we wouldn't take it back; so I decided to get rid of it for them."

"But do you think that is the way—" his father began to object, when Jerry, who despised evasions, said:

"Look here, Father; I don't care to explain all the details now; but it became a personal affair with me."

"Oh!" said his father. "With this Arcangelo fellow?"

"No, Father, with Paolina."

"With—whom?" his father appealed, suddenly staggered at hearing his son pronounce a girl's name as he repeated that.

"Paolina, Father. You see, this was a special case with me. I'm not planning to start prize-cooking contests all over my territory, if that's what you're afraid of."

"That's what I was afraid of," his father said, letting Jerry go out. But it was not what Henry Lownes was afraid of now. This new fear so agitated him that he had to talk it out late that evening with Jerry's mother, who reassuringly laughed at him and told him how absurd he was. But, Henry thought when he went to bed, that Constance had not heard their son say "Paolina."

SO SPRING sped into summer and summer romped on into early August with City Salesman J. Cappel so interested in his work that he had no desire at all for a vacation, and so eager to work for work's sake that he made any number of extra calls, in hours and out, at the store of A. Besippo without seeking any credit for them on the report-cards which he turned in at the office. To be sure, the books which he carried out and left with P. Besippo were not hardware catalogs, but "Lorna Doone," "Nicholas Nickleby," "Janice Meredith," "Old Chester Tales;" for Paolina wanted to read "everything so good which one likes in English," and Jerry enjoyed, as he remembered enjoying few things, the task of being her censor. He found out about her, of course.

Her father had been a clockmaker in a little town near Palermo; her mother had

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been the daughter of a civil magistrate, the *Pretore*. Both had died when Paolina was a little girl. Arcangelo and his two younger brothers had set out to seek their fortunes in America, leaving Paolina with their sister, Matilda, who was married to a man who kept a little hotel where nice French and English and American people came. But she, too, wanted America, so she had come to Arcangelo.

About the middle of August, Jerry realized that he could not continue to call at A. Besippo's without fully thinking through what he was getting Paolina and himself into. He wanted to possess Paolina with a passionate desire which held comparison with no other feeling in his experience. But he knew perfectly well that marriage involved many relations more complicated than mere possession. There was a gulf between the cool, shaded, perfectly ordered mansion where many servants waited upon three people, and the stifling, hot, raucous corner of Arcangelo's gaudy emporium, which was not to be bridged by the simple asking of little Paolina to be his own.

She might agree to be his, he thought; but he did not know. He had only her hand-clasps lingering, her half-whispered iteration of his name and a certain look in her eyes which, he liked to dream, could come only for him. Arcangelo was becoming mighty glowering and suspicious of Jerry these days; and there were many youths in the neighborhood who kept close track of Jerry's comings and goings. There was, in particular, one handsome, dark-eyed boy with a wonderful flashing smile showing his very white teeth whom Paolina called Raffaello; he took her to motion-picture shows and dances. Sometimes, when sitting at dinner with his mother and father, Jerry would suddenly jerk up and stare so that his mother would be alarmed, and believe his nerves had not yet recovered from the shock of war. But Jerry was only thinking of Paolina going out with Raffaello and perhaps—just perhaps—letting Raffaello put his arm about her and kiss her. Then Jerry could eat no more.

BUT sometimes he was able to imagine Raffaello lying in wait for him with a knife; and though that picture had its disadvantages, yet it was more pleasant to have in your mind when you were stuck behind the screens of a golf-club veranda sipping iced tea and lemonade with a lot of silly people who'd known one another all their lives and yet were trying to pretend they could get a thrill from each other. Jerry wanted to be sitting on the steps of A. Besippo's with Paolina smiling and happy beside him, while that Giuseppe, who had the beautiful voice and who ought to be in opera, sang the "Sole Mio" and the Sicilian "Pastorale," and scores of children ran about and Chiara, his wife, came out with her baby at her breast and laughed and called. Yet Jerry knew that he would not go there; but here upon the porch he must bring Paolina. So he set about the bringing.

"Next Saturday can you arrange, Paolina," he said, "to go off for a few hours with me? Let's leave at eleven and I'll have you back before dark."

"Where will we go?" Paolina asked, her eyes big.

"To Evanston, where I live. Listen, Paolina. In one thing I have been deceiving you. My name is Jerry, but the other is only my mother's name; my father's name is Henry Lownes."

"Oh!" said Paolina. "He whose name is upon your goods?"

"Yes."

Jerry had formed varying ideas of what Paolina would say when he told her this; but she said something quite different from anything he had imagined. "Arcangelo foun' out last week, Jerry," she said, looking at him very steadily. "He tol' me so. Where do you want me to go in Eva'ston?"

"To my home; to meet my mother. I'll have a *signora*—not my mother, but a good friend, a *signora*, when I come in the car to call for you. Would you like to go?"

"I would like to go," Paolina replied very quietly.

"Very well; I shall tell Arcangelo."

"He is not here. Besides, it is better I tell Arcangelo."

JERRY was not able to see her the next day, but he telephoned, and she informed him that she would go with him, but not to call for her at home; she would meet him on Michigan Avenue, "before the big lion."

So Jerry went around and saw one Cora, who was the wife of his best friend and who was an unusually dependable sort. Cora was with him in his own car when on Saturday morning, a few minutes before eleven, he stopped before the big lion on Michigan Avenue.

Paolina came just on time; when she was still far off among the crowds of people passing, Jerry spied her and stepped down with a leaping of his heart even wilder than usual. His Paolina, always so sweetly, so demurely dressed, had come down-town this morning to surprise him; she had purchased at a good store a complete new costume which most marvelously became her.

Her dress was white, with a pretty, quaint pattern of blue; her hat was more blue than white and wonderfully accorded; she had white silk stockings and her slender, pointed feet were in the tiniest and most petite of white shoes. The instinct which had governed her choice had nowhere erred in attempt to abolish her foreign look and manner; perhaps she understood that she could not.

"But—but, Jerry," Cora gasped, when she saw the girl, "she can't be the one you told me about."

"She," Jerry said, "she is Paolina!" and he managed somehow merely to shake her hand when she came up.

"I have been down-town two hours picking out these." Paolina said almost equally to Jerry and Cora, when he had introduced her. "So you like them; they are—alrite?" she asked anxiously.

"Get in there," Jerry said, almost choked up. She had a little money of her own saved up, he knew; and she must have spent it all to please him this morning. Well, she had pleased him; but he had to give her up to Cora on the back seat for the ride to Evanston. He could not hear much of what Cora and Paolina said on the way out; but when they were still a mile from the Lownes's home Cora suddenly leaned forward and commanded him not to stop in Evanston at all, but to continue straight through to the golf club. When Jerry asked why, she informed him ecstatically that he was a simpleton not to see what he had, and, but for Providence putting their fate in her capable hands, he had been on the verge of ruining two lives, one of which was his own. So Jerry obeyed; and after Cora had taken Paolina into the ladies' rooms at the club, Cora herself emerged to supply Jerry with essential information.

"You have probably the most exquisite opportunity ever offered man to start things right or wrong for that girl," she told Jerry blandly. "Now attend—what lying is to be done I shall do; already have done a little, in fact. You must merely back me up She—Paolina—need know nothing about it. Must not, indeed. I require of her only to be herself. Now you, dear old chump, will—" and she outlined her undertaking for them.

It transgressed the truth as slightly as possible. Cora merely stated impressively that Paolina was an Italian friend of hers whom she had found in the city and had managed to bring out to the club for the day. Jerry Lownes was interested; yes, Jerry had been for quite a while. Of course Jerry had been much abroad, you know. Then Cora let people look at Paolina, talk to her a little, and they did all the rest themselves. Cora did not even have to suggest the palazzo and villa on Capri which had become firmly Paolina's by two o'clock. The Besippo family was very old; her brother, who had been in the army—which was all Cora said—became a decorated captain of the most gallant Bersaglieri. And it all went on and on without Paolina in the least suspecting. Paolina was simply herself—so pretty and shy at meeting strange people who effusively greeted her in such numbers; she flushed pinkly often, when they said something she did not understand; and, when confused, dropped into the soft, unconscious exclamations of her native tongue, "*Mamma mia! . . . Cosa? . . . Grazie! No lo so.*"

Girls and men gathered about to listen to her; altogether too many for Jerry, who, against all rules for Saturday afternoon, took an arrant beginner out on the course to play golf; but a gallery followed which—as Cora proudly proclaimed—would have been a compliment to Chick Evans. So the afternoon passed, during which the telephones between the club and Evanston homes worked reliably; and at five o'clock Constance Esther Cappel Lownes arrived on the club-house porch.

A FEW minutes later Jerry came in with Paolina, who was wearing some golf things which Cora had supplied. Paolina was quite tired and hot; but she was still excited, and eagerly interested in that "so funny mashie stick which should maik the ball hop so, but I do not maik it."

The introduction to Mrs. Lownes at that moment was not exactly as Cora had planned; but it would do, Cora thought, as she watched Jerry's mother. Yes, it decidedly "did." For Mrs. Lownes had been hearing of nothing but this girl for the last fifteen minutes.

Had it not been for that warning from her husband way back in May when Jerry had had that cooking contest, Constance Esther Cappel Lownes must have been caught completely off guard; and even with that remembrance, she was hopelessly

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"By George, he was at the Old Bailey and falling down the dock stairs with seven years penal servitude, before he realized he'd done it."

The Bit of Luck

By A. S. M. Hutchinson

Author of "Once Aboard the Lugger," "The Happy Warrior," etc.

"ESCAPE impossible! Of course it's not impossible. Nothing's impossible in this life, and though that's a canting platitude and generally a lie on the part of the kind of person who says it, it's darn true. Take *my* word.

"Those chaps"—he pointed with his pipe toward the gang of convicts working in two long lines at the foot of the tor below us, "those chaps can escape all right, as a man can do anything anywhere, provided he sets his mind to it."

"And provided," I said drowsily—I was three parts asleep—"provided he's the right sort of man with the right sort of mind."

"Well, you needn't worry about that, either. If he's not the right sort with the right sort of mind, he won't start on one of your impossible stunts—prison-breaking, or flying, or any other. No, there's only one thing you've got to make provision for in these 'impossible' jobs, and that's luck—the little bit of luck that always cuts in one side or the other in every risky thing a chap lays out for. Good luck, and he pulls out a heaven-sent miracle; bad luck, and the whole bottom rips right out of the miracle he's made on his own."

I said, "That's all right. But you're getting away from it. It's about getting away from that place"—I indicated the distant prison—"that we're arguing."

He had been lying (as was I) on his back, his hands beneath his head, his voice coming sepulchrally from under his hat, pulled over his face against the sun.

He sat up with a jerk that brought his hands to his toes, and turned toward me. "Don't you worry. That's what I'm talking about. That's just a case in point for you. And a pretty hot one. I don't mind telling you. You're the first man outside of me and another that'll hear it. Look here, you're one of these writing chaps. Make a story out of this."

I said "Good enough," and snuggled my head and adjusted my hat against the sun a bit more comfortably to doze off. In my capacity as one of those writing chaps I had been given stories before. "Good enough. Go ahead."

"What'll you call it?"

"Call it? Man alive, how the devil do *I* know?"

This was the rottenest way of being pleasantly lulled to sleep by a story—the way of the man who keeps digging you in the ribs with questions. So I spoke irritably, and finished "How do I know? I don't even know what it's about."

"I tell you"—he had assumed an annoyingly deep voice, as though he really had something big to tell—"I tell you, it's about what I was saying. About how a bit of luck always cuts in when a man's up against it. Cuts in this side or that. And about a case in point right here in breaking out of this prison."

Infernally annoying. Getting much too near to be pleasantly drowsifying. I couldn't help saying in surprise—and how

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Bit by bit, day by day, month by month the prison shuts down on him, and crushes him down.

can you sleep if you're going to be surprised?

"*Here*, was it? *This* prison?"

"Here? Of course it was here! Darn it, it was right there on that very road where those chaps are working now."

I echoed his "Darn it." "What was?"

"Why, the breakaway. This breakaway from that prison that I'm going to tell you about. Look, there's the very spot. See those two boulders on the left of the road, and how the moor gets up into a bit of an embankment on the right? See?"

I could tell he was pointing and waiting for me, and I have suffered all my life from an infernal politeness which makes bruskness almost impossible in me. Moreover, the story was starting with a realism that I knew would prove delusive—they always do—but which insisted on attention. So I groaned, and struggled up to sitting position, and squinted at his beastly boulders and embankment, and grunted, and lay down again.

No peace. "Well, what'll you call it, then?" he repeated.

Oh, h——! I cast back to what he had said when he first put the question. Something about the bit of luck in everything, wasn't it? "What about 'The Bit of Luck'?" I grunted into my hat.

Couldn't see him, but could feel he was mentally visualizing this suggestion in print. Apparently he found a dramatic look about it—imagined it in the sprawling great headline capitals of a cheap illustrated magazine. "Yes, that's good," he said. "That's what it was, anyway. It sure was. Right. Now I'll start."

He started, and I went to sleep. . . .

He droned, I suppose (Heaven knows how long) and I slept. A question aroused me. "What'll I call him?" he was saying. "Eh?"

How on earth was I to know? I didn't even know who he was talking about, let alone whether it was an adjective or a surname he wanted to apply to the chap. I raised my heavy lids. The sun reflecting through my hat showed me the maker's name. "Call him Tabor," I suggested.

He commented doubtfully: "Tabor? Rum name."

"Makes rum hats," I muttered. It was a poor hat.

"What?"

"I say he was a rum chap."

The wild shot was obviously good and obviously pleased him—the suggestion of an attentive listener. He said pleasedly, "He was, wasn't he? Rum! He sure was. Yes, that's good. A rum name for a rum chap. Clever, that. I suppose you writing chaps get into the knack of it. Right, we'll call him Tabor. Not a scrap like his real name; and that's right too, isn't it?"

"Saves trouble," I agreed, "libels and all that."

"Well, there he was, you see," he went on (presumably where he had left off). "There he was, this chap Ta—what was it?"

"Tabor. F. F. Tabor, Hat—"

"That? Tabor. F. F. Tabor, that's good. There he was, this Tabor—F. for Fred, eh?—this Fred Tabor, in about as bad a hole as a man could be in. Wasn't it, eh?"

I hadn't the remotest idea. So I agreed, "Rather!"

"Absolute black ruin in front of him unless he could meet this bill, and a sporting chance of getting the whole business plumb on its feet again if only he could lay his hands on the ready to tide over. Say, you can imagine him sitting there in his office—darn well furnished office, the latest fittings and contrivances, two clerks

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in the outer room, slap-up girl stenographer—nice girl, she was. Took her to the theatre one night. Supper and all. Cost me seven poun' ten. Absolutely straight, you know. Nothing in it—slap-up girl stenographer in a little room alongside. Every sign and mark of prosperity. Whole thing built up by his own hands—head, rather. Respected by every one he traded with. Liked above a bit by every one who knew him. Stenographer used to keep a photo of him in her desk—showed it to me. And there was this poor devil hunched up at his big writing-table, elbows on the crimson leather, fists at his temples, black ruin hanging up its hat in the lobby and just about to walk in.

"All for the want of the ready just to tide over with. You get that, don't you? Stick that in your story, because that's vital, if you're going to make a job of it. Right; well, at that very darn moment the opportunity comes. Trust funds. Tide him over slick. Absolutely. Him and his wife and kid—mutual idolization society, those three—and his good name and his old mother and his young brother (never saw brothers so thick as those two) and the slap-up stenographer and the two clerks and the whole caboodle of them. What a brute of a temptation to come at a chap, eh? Like a darn life-belt popping up under the nose of a drowning man—and about as likely to be let float by, what? Don't care who the chap might be. This chap—this Ta—what was it?"

"Tabor."

"This Tabor was as clean white as the Archbishop of Canterbury. No more idea of playing it down than the Pope till that moment. Idea — opportunity — plumped into his hands while he sat there. Trust funds. Misappropriation. Embezzlement. Took a chance on it. Lost. By George, he was at the Old Bailey and falling down the dock stairs with seven years' penal, before he darn well had time to realize he'd done it."

This was a dramatic touch and had me more awake than I had been so far. But now he tided off into a long ramble in which came to me incoherent references to the man Tabor's first bitter years in prison, and the slap-up stenographer, and his wife, and one thing and another, on the tide of which I dozed off again. I might fill in the blank perhaps, while he talked and I most comfortably slept, by saying that I had run into him casually a week before while doing a holiday in a bit of a cottage on the moor. I was walking and fishing. He appeared to spend his time—whenever I happened upon him—in sitting motionless on some upland like a statue of the moor's own granite and brooding over the prison. What he was and what his job was I never knew—nor troubled to conjecture till he gave me this story.

IN THE course of it—when he got me interested—I guessed once or twice, but wrongly, I think. At its conclusion I guessed again, and not far off, I imagine. I thought first he was the man Tabor himself, but he clearly wasn't—the stuff about the stenographer and later his own part in the business dished that. I thought last—and I suspicion it still—that he had taken on Tabor's job; the odd job you shall hear in a minute. Tabor dead (or, by Jove, it comes to me, in prison again perhaps) and his money and his enthusiasm left to this chap. He'd have been a good man for it, anyway.

A biggish chap, taller than he looked because of his enormous chest and shoulders. Arms to match. Brown as mahogany and about as hard—he seemed to wear a singlet and no shirt, and the sleeves of his flannel jacket, slipping back, disclosed the terrific limbs they covered. Hands to match. And face. Curiously kind of thrusting forward cheekbones and the skin stretched very tight, without hollows or gauntness. Seemed to be from, or to have lived in, Canada or the States by some of his speech, but—well, what does it matter anyway? There he was, and this is his story.

Next thing I heard him saying was one of the most painful questions a polite man—who knows he's guilty—can have addressed to him: "You're not asleep, are you?"

I MUTTERED into my hat "Rather not," and found to my great discomfort of mind that the man Tabor was now out of prison again. "Well there he was, a free man again—" and the story presumably ended without my having the faintest notion how he had effected this wonderful escape of his! I lay there—wide-awake now—trying to catch a hint of how it had been done, and then suddenly realized that the story, far from being ended, was only just beginning; that this man Tabor hadn't escaped, or tried to, but had served his time and been released and that the prison-breaking with the bit of luck that was to be the point of it all, was by Tabor contrived for another man: to get another man out of the just short of seven years' unthinkable hell he'd been through himself. I sat up and began to take notice.

I was invited at the outset to imagine this poor devil Tabor free again and come back to wife dead, kid dead, mother dead—he didn't mention if the stenographer were dead also—all his world but his young brother dead as ashes; and in the place where his heart used to be, a live coal of scorching, flaming hate against the laws that had taken such toll of him for his one mad slip: that and an appalling horror of the thought that other men, clean as he, blameless, but for that accursed juxtaposition of trial and temptation, as he, were going through what he had been through—"down there."

"Look, it's this way. Down there, and in all the long-sentence convict prisons, there's two classes of convicts. Different as chalk and cheese. One's the born criminal. Ready-made for the job just as much as the born poet. You know the type. Born in crime, dragged up in crime, lives in crime and dies in crime. Born in a filthy slum room, three or four other families living in it. Filthy slum mother. Never knew his father; mother probably didn't, either. Has a drop of gin to keep him quiet as often as a drop of milk. Blasphemes fluently before he's cut all his teeth. Grows up true to type. Can't you see him? Sloping forehead, sloping chin, sloping shoulders, thick ears sticking straight out, rotten teeth, pigeon chest, arms like an ape—reaching to his knees, goes to prison on long sentence as soon as he's old enough and lives there permanently for the rest of his life in intervals of ticket of leave.

"The other type. Other type's the man like Tabor—clean, honest, gentle. Sudden impulse. Sudden necessity and opportunity. Finds himself down there. Warders all know his sort. Always see it go the same way. Starts with the old habits. Says: 'Thank you,' and 'Please.' Stands upright. Moves briskly. Keeps his eyes wide open. Bit by bit, day by day, month by month—ah, man alive, eternal grinding year by eternal grinding year, the prison shuts down on him and crushes him down, down, just as if the roof and walls of his cell were contracting on him. Down he goes, bit by bit. The 'Thank yous' go, and the 'Pleases' go, and the straight back goes, and the brisk walk goes and the wide eyes go. Everything that was in him goes, and they let him loose and he shuffles out, and he finds everything that was of him gone. Just hate left in him, and horror. Like Tabor.

"Now look. Tabor, being the sort of chap he had been, had the horror of it all uppermost. He'd not been out a week when a forgotten relative in Australia or some darn place died in—just like they do in stories, in— What is it?"

"Intestate."

"Sure—intestate, and left him quite a respectable little pot of money. Wouldn't you think he'd clear off somewhere strange and quiet, and start in to sit down and get back to life and enjoy it? Wouldn't you?"

I nodded assent.

"Do you know, he set up right there in London, and set down to the oddest idea ever—prison-snatcher, convict-snatcher. Had the craze—and by darn he was right. He sure was—that escape could be worked from outside if word could be got to the chap before he went in——"

I INTERPOSED: "But how could that be done?"

"Right when the chap was sentenced. Listen to me. Tabor set himself to sit in court every criminal sessions, and if he saw a clean chap, like he had been, brought there by sudden chance and impulse, like he'd been brought there, to get in touch with the chap's relatives—old father or poor wife or some such—and say to 'em—Look. When you go down to the cells to say good-by to that boy of yours, tell him 'Hope. There's a sport going to escape you. Hope. Never give up hope, boy. Soon or late, he says, he'll get you out, and he sure will. He says you're never to give up hoping. Get up every morning saying, 'It will sure be to-day, and go to bed every night saying, 'It will sure be to-morrow.' He says watch for it. Keep bright for it. Jump right when it comes. Always be ready to jump right at it when it comes. It'll come, boy. It sure will. Hope.'

"That was Tabor's idea—to keep a good man from going down, down, down, as prison crushed him down, by giving him hope. To keep the thank-yous and the pleases and the straight back and the brisk walk and the wide eye in him by hope, and to yank him out before ever the hope began to crumple."

He leaned forward and tapped me impressively on the knee——

"By darn, d'you know who was the very first case of the sort Tabor was looking for

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that came up into the dock under him sitting watching in the gallery? It was his own young brother."

He certainly had me surprised by this development. I suppose another man in my place would have remarked cynically that these sudden, these guiltless, lapses seemed rather to run in the Tabor family, but I never can say that sort of thing and sometimes I'm glad I can't. I was here. He made a humanly natural case for Tabor the younger. This was sudden and unpremeditated crime of another kind. In three words, "shooting with intent," and in half a dozen, a girl who was no better than she might have been and another man, and young Tabor drawing on him with the man's own gun (in the man's own flat) and leaving him for dead and never coming to his senses again until his brother, in the cells below the court, tears running down his face, was whispering to him the words he had meant to communicate to a prisoner, but which were unthinkable pain to have to say to his own idolized young brother:

"Hope, old man. Never lose hope. You know I was going to get other chaps out of where you're going. My God, I never thought it'd be you! Dear old man, it'll be all the more sure, all the quicker. Watch for it, old man. Day and night, watch; hope. Good-by, old man."

It was just over a year that he had to hope and to watch for it, as things turned out. The end of that time found Tabor the younger, after brief sojournings in various jails, lodged at the prison that lay in our view; and now at last I was given the straight story of the escape, and began to look out for the "bit of luck" which had been promised as the pith of the adventure.

"Tabor came and lived down here," he continued; "spent hours watching from this very rise where we sit, and worked out his plan. I'd arranged to help him. He came up to town to me. 'Going to get young Bill'—that was his brother's name—'out of it this month,' he told me. 'You're on?' 'Sure.' 'You can drive a car?' 'Sure thing. Most any make.' 'Come and look at one I've bought.'

"By darn, that was a car. Last thing off the market in autos, and left the rest like bassinets. Six-cylinder Pelham-Flyte. But what made me wince was her color. Bright scarlet. Bright! It made every red I'd ever seen look like tinned salmon. 'Going to rush him away in that,' says Tabor.

" 'By darn, you're going to advertise the journey,' I said. 'That color would shout loud enough for a vaudeville star or a colored boxer. I reckon a blind man would remember that car.'

" 'That's right,' says Tabor. 'That's what it's for. Now look. Stand away a bit and look.'

"With that he steps to her and round her and flicks down cunningly rolled-up things buttoning under her on studs, and by George, in two ticks she was a dun-colored old craft, solemn enough to take the chief mourner to a funeral. Canvas covers, it was—that hooked down all over her paint work. Cute. Give you *my* word.

" 'Now you can get the idea,' says Tabor, and he starts in and tells it me. Simple as falling off a house. His brother was in a gang working on a road—that road down there—and likely to be on it quite a piece of time. We'd rush that road in the scarlet car—twice. First time we'd have a breakdown right alongside where the boy was working, and whisper him the word: 'Next time we come, jump for it.' Next day we'd come again. Breakdown again. Young Bill'd jump for it. Us off like hell behind us. Stop in a few miles. Pull down the covers on the car. Double on our tracks and, while they were wiring all over the country to hold up a scarlet auto, amble the boy leisurely to safety in our solemn old mourning-coach."

"By Jove, it was a scheme," I said. "Go on."

"It sure was. Dandy. And there's not much more go on to go. We ran it slick. I tuned that auto up a day or two, till I got to know her so I could run her blindfold into hell an' out again. Then I fetched her down here. We ran round a bit so the warders should get the idea of us—wealthy tourist doing the moor in his swell red streak. Then one day we let out down that road. Young Bill we'd fixed with field-glasses from this knoll here. The convicts were working about ten yards apart each side the route. Opening up the drainage ditching was the job. Warders pacing about. Young Bill fortunately working within twenty yards of the head of the line—if he'd been midway—they stretched a quarter mile, I daresay—we'd have stood a risk of some one jumping into the road in the hallaballoo when we got off, and getting tangled up in the wheels and stopping us.

As it was, we ran into the road from this end—see? Up toward those boulders—and through the two lines of the poor devils—them all glad of an excuse to stop their digging and have a stare and a scowl or a grin. Ran up slow till we were close

(*Continued on page 123*)

"Tabor came and lived down here; spent hours watching from this very rise, and worked out his plan."

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UNDER *the* SPREADING CHESTNUT TREE

"WHAT'S your name?" said an officer to a young colored lad who joined the ship at the Cape.

"Algoa Bay, sir."

"Where were you born?"

"Wasn't born at all, sir."

"Wasn't born at all?"

"No, sir; was washed ashore in a storm."

A PARSIMONIOUS Texan suddenly became a Crœsus through the discovery of oil on his ranch. Accompanied by his wife, he went to town to close the deal, which brought several millions.

As the two left the lawyer's office and started up Main Street, the wife came to a stop before the window of a grocery. "Oh, Abner!" she exclaimed. "Look! What d'you say if we buy one o' them there bottles o' olives?"

"There you go! There you go!" growled the husband. "Tryin' to put on airs the first thing, ain't you?"

"NOW, son, what was the very first thing the children of Israel did after they crossed the Red Sea?" asked the new minister. "Speak loud so all can hear."

"They dried themselves!" yelled the seven-year-old.

"WELL, Sambo, how do you like your new place?"

"Berry well, I think. I jest didn't like mah brekfus dis mornin'. Missus biled t'ree eggs and give me de brof."

A PRIVATE reporting to his post surgeon on a sick-call was asked: "What's your trouble?"

"I am bothered by sleeplessness," was the answer.

"Don't you sleep nights?" asked the doctor.

"Oh yes, sir," replied the patient. "I sleep very well at night, and fairly well in the morning, but I can't seem to sleep in the afternoon."

IN A certain town, before Prohibition, a preacher met the "village soak."

"Mr. Alsop," said he, "I don't know when I have been so pleased as yesterday on seeing you at our evening service."

The reprobate appeared dazed; then his face cleared. "Well, well," he rasped, "so *that's* where I was last night!"

EDITOR'S NOTE

Though the sign is the Chestnut Tree, no story is barred by its youth. We will gladly pay for available ones. Address all manuscripts to "The Chestnut Tree," enclosing stamped, addressed envelope.

WHEN the boy next door told Isabel that the moon was made of green cheese, she asked her grandfather if it were so.

"What do you think about it?" he asked.

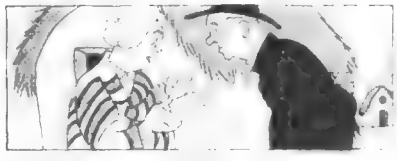
"Well, I'm pretty sure it's not true," she said.

"What makes you think that?"

"Because God made the moon before he made the cows."

THE teacher of a class in hygiene bade her pupils write the reasons why, in their opinion, cremation was superior to burial.

"Cremation is best," wrote one lad, "because the person might only be in a swoon, and if he is burned he can not recover."



IN A small Irish village the mother of a soldier met the priest. "Sure, it's bad news I have," she said. "Pat has been killed."

"Oh, I am very sorry!" said the priest. "Did you receive word from the War Office?"

"No," she said. "I got word from himself."

The priest looked perplexed. "But how is that?" he asked.

"Sure," she said, "here is his letter. Read for yourself."

The letter said: "Dear Mother: I am now in the Holy Land."

A TRAVELING man driving through Oklahoma stopped to inquire the way of a portly negro, who was supervising a group of black laborers in a field of onions. It was a warm afternoon, but they were moving along at so vigorous a rate that the white man was interested. "What's your recipe for keeping your men so lively?" he inquired.

The proprietor grinned. "Well suh, Ah reckon it won't do no damage to tell yuh that Ah goes aroun' fum tahm to tahm wid a nice jug of—ah—cidah, suh. It do he'p remarkable, suh, yessuh! An' when Ah begins to spy duh tongues a-commencin' to hang out a little again, Ah quotes a verse ob Scripture at 'em preparatory to fetchin' roun' de jug again. An' dat Scripture do he'p likewise, suh, yes suh!"

"And what's the text, uncle?

"De text is fum de prophet Isaiah, and it runs: 'Hoe, ebbery one what thirsteth!'"

A YOUNG couple were occupying the porch swing later than usual one moonlight night. From a near-by window her mother inquired: "Mary, what are you doing up so late?"

"Looking at the beautiful moon, Mother."

"Well, it's twelve o'clock. You had better send the moon home."

RECRUITING sergeant: "Th' greatest life in the world—travel, good pay, lots of fun, edycation, what d'ya say, young feller? Sign up to-day!"

Prospective recruit: "Well, I'd like to, but I want to think it over a bit. I'll come back in a couple of days."

Sergeant: "Better make up yer mind right now. I expect my discharge any day!"

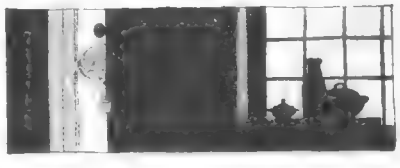
ED: "Say, Jack, how do you teach a girl to swim?"

Jack: "First you lead her to the water, then you put your arm around her."

Ed: "Aw, cut it out! She's muh sister."

Jack: "Oh! Then just chuck her in."

ONE night while Paris was in darkness out of respect for the aim of the Hun aviators, an American was accosted by two men. One asked in French the way to a certain hotel. The American attempted to direct him in the same language. They gesticulated and "pas comprez'd" for some minutes. Then the man turned in great disgust to his companion and said: "Aw, h—! Come on, I can't understand these d—— Frenchmen."



LITTLE Bobby had been learning his Sunday-school lesson and was very much impressed with the idea of the omnipresence of God. A few nights later his mother asked him to bring her a bottle of milk from the back porch.

"Me can't," Bobby demurred. "All dark out there."

"But you're not afraid to go anywhere, Bobby," she reassured. "You know God won't let anything hurt you."

"Is God out there on the porch in the dark?" queried Bobby.

"Certainly He is. Didn't you learn that God was everywhere?"

Cautiously Bobby opened the door a few inches and, peering out, called: "God, will you please hand me that milk-bottle off the table out there?"

A RECENT Christmas ad reads:

ATTRACTIVE GIFTS FOR LADIES OF UNUSUAL FASCINATION.

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Where your tire money goes when you skid–

Every time you skid you wear off miles and miles of tire service. It's like so many dollars being thrown in front of the street cleaner's scraper. Loss of traction always means loss of tire money.

Chief Engineer of the International Motor Company, A. F. Masury, says:

"Sliding the wheels of railroad cars causes flat wheels. If sliding a hardened steel tire over a smooth steel rail for a few seconds can so abrade the wheel that its pounding will crack 150-lb. rails, fancy the damage to a rubber tire in skidding or sliding over a stone or concrete road.

"No matter how carefully and skillfully you drive when roads are wet and slippery, it is next to impossible to avoid skidding unless your tires are equipped with Anti-Skid Chains—such as Weed Chains."

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Weed Chains insure safety, economy and tire protection —Always put them on "At the First Drop of Rain".

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CADBURY'S GHOSTS

(*Continued from page 51*)

it was Henderson, and this was the old Henderson house on the Weldon Road which every one avoided by night and passed hurriedly by day. It was a house abandoned and accursed, a house disgraced among dwellings, a house wherefrom men said the very rats had departed in fear.

Cadbury would no more knowingly have set foot upon the threshold of that house than he would have entered the contagious ward of the city hospital.

He knew all the stories told of it, all its evil and terrifying associations. So did most of the people in Cataract. It was a favorite topic among the young folks, who loved to shiver in groups at tales of "old Henderson's ghost." It was no less a popular theme among the credulous older ones who remembered "old Henderson" in life and recalled the tragedy of his taking off.

Cadbury had heard these stories for the last fifteen or twenty years, and their gruesome details now came tumbling into his consciousness in a dreadful flood. He arose and made for the door, intending to plunge out into the night. In the firelight his legs cast wavering shadows, oscillant and gigantesque across the floor and up the dingy walls.

Throwing wide the door, a gust of wind rushed at him, hurled a torrent of water upon him, almost overcame his balance. Outside the night was as dark as a blind coal-miner's pocket. It seemed to Cadbury that a man could not endure such a storm. Choosing the lesser terror of the moment, torn between two fears, he shut the door and returned, drenched, to his poor fireside.

Shuddering, he sank upon his chair and laid wood on the blaze, even the tell-tale bit which had identified his shelter as a house of horrors. It was the last. The fire flamed up, sending out thin tendrils of warmth.

Cadbury fixed his eyes in the heart of that living thing and watched it wane, struggling with little hopeful flickering rallies to live.

Sometimes he leaned forward and encouraged it by some slight readjustment of its elements, so that as yet unburned surfaces would be exposed to the flames. A sort of torpor dulled his sensibilities. He was like a man who fights cold until he begins actually to freeze, when he forgets how much he suffers.

AND then, with a despairing glance into the shadows for some last still overlooked fragment of wood, Cadbury suddenly perceived "Old Man Henderson" seated on a phantom chair at the other side of the hearth.

"Howdy-do," remarked the phantom sociably. He dropped a jangling collection of metal links upon the hollow floor by his side. "There, ain't a-goin' to tote that old tracechain no more. Tunketted nuisance, only I cal'late a ghost ain't real reg'lar 'nless he lugs suthin' that rattles. Nice fire you got, young man. Many a long year sence I seen smoke goin' up that chimbley, I can tell ye!"

Nathaniel Cadbury answered not, having performed the reverse of the celebrated experiment attributed to Galatea.

III

OLD MAN HENDERSON was a large, loosely articulated person typed after a fashion we have learned to specify as "Lincolnian." His thin iron-gray hair, neatly parted and brushed in a flat scallop, had sent out a couple of flanking parties that affected a junction in a bushy tuft under his angular jaw. The high-boned bulk of a powerful nose overhung the smooth-shaven acreage of a wide upper lip and shadowed a thin, grim mouth. Beneath his shaggy brows his eyes, deep set, borrowed the gleam of the hearth-fire and shone greenly, like those of a cat in the dark.

He was dressed in a suit "decently black" and cheap, quite evidently his go-to-meeting outfit, a boiled shirt and white dicky collar two sizes too large for his meager turkey neck, the same being girt with a white lawn tie bowed into a knot of pressed-steel rectitude. Below the hiatus of white cotton sock immediately succeeding his trouser bottoms one encountered the tops of a pair of brand-new stiff-soled shoes with elastic side gores, each furnished with a stout webbing loop, front and back, designed to facilitate pulling them on. I say they were brand new—meaning, of course, brand new at the time of the old gentleman's funeral, which had occurred at least twenty years before his wraith foregathered with Nate Cadbury in the light of a fire flickering upon that long-abandoned hearthstone.

"You could have a lot better fire," remarked the phantom, "if you'd git an armful o' wood from the shed. The's some out there."

A hypothetical third occupant of the room would have been at a loss to say, as between this pallid effigy of a man that was Nate Cadbury, and the more mobile though somewhat transparent figure of Solomon Henderson, which one was the specter. As a sporting proposition, you might have said Cadbury was a "shade" the better.

"Not very sociable," went on Henderson. "Land sakes! Anybody'd think on a night like this you'd be tickled to death with a little company, 'stead of settin' here without a soul to talk to. Still, I don't s'pose I'm competent to jedge what a body'd think, anyhow, bein' it's so long sence I had one; and maybe you don't like talkin' with souls. Most folks don't, I find."

The speaker smiled in appreciation of a humor so apt, and the light in the deep-set eyes (like a cat in the dark) actually twinkled. As for Cadbury's being "tickled to death," there was a not very remote possibility that something of the sort had actually happened.

"Most folks don't," persisted the phantom. It was apparent that he was in a garrulous mood, having, like the ancient mariner, engaged a tenacious forefinger in the buttonhole of a conversational fortuity. "People has be'n tryin' for a good many years to learn flyin', but them that I've met in the last twenty years have all come pretty close to it, in the matter of gittin' away from a given spot in a specified time, more or less. You're the only feller I've met that couldn't give ol' Maude S. a head start to the first quarter-pole and run her off'n her feet in the stretch. As long as I was occupyin' a tenement o' clay I thought hosses and deers was the liveliest critters on legs, but I've learned different. A human bein' that's met a ghost is a dartin' sunbeam compared to either one."

In the bosom of Nate Cadbury something stirred, like the movement of a newly wound alarm-clock.

He was able to agitate the great toe of his right foot surreptitiously and experimentally, yet enough to convince him that he still lived.

"I guess I ought to be real grateful," went on his vis-à-vis, "to have somebody to talk to, even if you don't talk back. Owin' to the talent for amazin' speed peculiar to the human race, it's an op'tun'ty absolutely new and novel in my experience as a ha'nt. If you'd of knowed me in the flesh, you'd recollect that I was fond of company, a first-class talker on a large variety of subjects, and a member of the local chapter of the Great American Cracker Bar'l and Hot Stove Society, in good and reg'lar standin'. I don't s'pose you appreciate what it means to peregrinate around for twenty years or so in a sort o' solitary unconfinement, without producin' any more useful sounds than an occasional holler groan or a rattle o' that doggone old trace-chain that the rules calls for; now, do you?"

It became obvious to the slowly reviving comprehension of Cadbury that an answer was demanded. Owing to the rigid and frigid paralysis of his throat muscles, vocal reply was impossible. With an effort, however, he managed to nod.

"No you don't, neither," contradicted Henderson, in what could properly be termed a spirited manner. "No, you don't; because you hain't never tried it. You wait and see how it feels; that's all I got to say."

Cadbury was only too willing to wait. The ghost's genial admonition was not needed.

"You remember me, I s'pose?" queried Henderson. "Your pa was a real good friend o' mine, and your ma never bought a pound o' butter nor an egg from no one else f'r years. You was a 'cute little feller, but when you growed older I didn't think you'd amount to much. You didn't look to me to have much spunk. Cal'late you was about sixteen last time I saw you; and fat. Your folks let you eat too much sweet stuff. You don't enjoy good health at the present time, I take it."

To Cadbury's surprise, his mouth opened and words issued therefrom. His voice sounded quite as hollow and uncanny as that of the specter.

"No," he said; "but I would if I had it."

"Sofy cushions and fried fish and liver-pills and Sunday newspapers and doughnuts and stummick bitters and hot biscuits and ingrowin' symptoms of the imagination is what ails you," said the ghost severely, as one man to another whom he desires to chasten for that other's good. "Don't take no doctor to diagnurse your case. You got workophobia and fatty degeneration of the callous marks on your hands.

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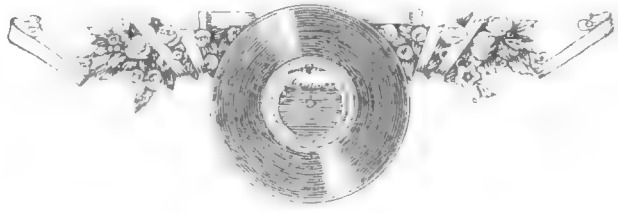

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The internal high-hattus of your top floor is all coagulated with the floats 'em and gets 'em of uselessness and infatuation with your own laziness.

"You got as many worries as Woodrow Wilson, and ten times as many wrinkles on your forehead, which only goes to show that doin' nothin' is one of our most fatiguin' occupations."

The late Solomon Henderson, self-confessed conversationalist and cracker-barrel Socrates, grasped his right elbow with his left hand and his hirsute chin with his right and spat hisslessly upon the coals. It was evident that he was having a splendid time.

"The's two ways of bein' a good talker," he observed, "and one of 'em's to keep still an' listen. Silence gives consent, so I take it me and you agrees regardin' your little personal peculiarities. I wa'n't intendin' to hurt your feelin's, but I'm consider'ble older'n you be; at least, I was when I canceled the lease o' my mortal habitation. An' lemme tell you. Folks pays them there mediums good money to reach out into the spirit world and harpoon odd bits of advice concernin' their worldly affairs. I ain't criticisin', I hope, when I say that as agents of the said spirit world they'd ought to work on a good deal smaller commission, considerin' the results they git."

"I never w-w-went near a m-m-medium in my life," defended Cadbury with timid resentment. His terror was gradually wearing off. In spite of Henderson's disconcerting transparency, which enabled one to perceive quite distinctly the back of his chair and the outlines of the dingy woodwork beyond him, there was, if one may say so, something rather human about him. Yes, he was, after all, pathetically human.

"Oh, that's all right," he conceded. "'T wouldn't make no differ'nce to me if you had. Only you might's well understand you're gettin' some right good advice without expense to yourself. Not that I ain't pleased to give it; in fact, here's a funny thing. Mortal folks has took a very peculiar attitude toward us spirits for a long spell now, in fact as fur back as any ghost that I've met can remember; and it's that attitude that's kep' us from comin' around oftener and bein' a heap more sociable.

"Now I'd like to know how you'd feel yourself. S'pose you was wanderin' around sort of lonesome, without no one to talk to, and you run acrost a picnic party eatin' pickles and ham sandwiches and cold apple pie in a moonlit glen, or some sich place. Minute they see you, the women folks commence to shriek, and the men folks either do one thing or another—run for the nearest log to hide behind or heave the pickle bottle through you. Is that nice! Is it p'lite or hosp'table or kind? I ask you.

"I've had enough lead propelled through my system by nervous owners of double-barreled shot-guns and repeatin' rifles to supply the United States Army for six months active fightin'. Not that it causes me no inconvenience or leaves perforations. If it did I'd look like a copy of the 'Blue Danube' arranged for a self-playin' pianner. But it does hurt my feelin's. I nor no other ghost ain't got the slightest antiphony toward the human race, or that small part of it that's still trackin' up the sands of time. We're entirely inimical and friendly and as well-meanin' as a kid tryin' to remoddle his father's watch with a pot o' glue and a copy of 'Robinson's Boys' Easy Guide to Electricity.' Did you ever hear of a real, well-reg'lated ghost that was affiliated with the Amalgamated Spirits' Union, and dues fully paid, so much as puttin' finger-marks on the doors or leavin' the corner of a rug turned up? No, sirree, you didn't."

"My ideas on the subject," observed Cadbury, still timorous but a trifle encouraged by the friendly attitude of the late Mr. Henderson, "have been mainly gained from reading. I never made the personal acquaintance of a—a—disembodied spirit before."

"That ain't all," said the phantom severely. "You dodged it. So does all other dwellers in the pent-houses of civilization that eats fried beef-steak and cabinet puddin' whenever the's enough stale bread in the house. Looks like a conspiracy to keep ghosts lonesome. Say, did you ever notice a dorg that's be'n shut up in the barn wiggle around and yip with joy and purty nigh wag his tail off'n his body when you unlock the door? Well, that's a ghost when a human bein' makes somethin' of it. A kind word, or a pat on the head—oh, figurative, of course—will make a ghost your slave for life, Nathan'l.

"Books don't know nothin' about us spirits. Books is full o' misleadin' statements. Remember that feller, Tomlinson, rattlin' around the universe like a pea in a skillet, gittin' the cold shoulder from St. Peter and the devil both, jest because he'd depended on books for his good and bad. That's what books'll do to ye. I run across him once myself, and he was the most meachin', whipped-dog, rock-dodgin' outcast I ever see. You got to have a personality of your own to succeed as a ghost, these days. The's plenty o' room at the top, but competition's gettin' keener every day. Say, I hope I ain't borin' you stiff, runnin' on the way I be. Sakes alive! I thought that time you started to leave when you found out what house this was I was goin' to lose my chance at ye. You don't know what a real treat this is. It wouldn't be true to say I was jest dyin' for the want of some one to set and chat with; but I can tell you I was gittin' desp'rit."

"I'm very glad to—to have afforded you the—the opportunity to—to——"

"That's real nice of you, Nathan'l. I ain't ongrateful. Of course, the' ain't much I can do to return the favor. Advice is awful cheap. I know what I'm talkin' about, though. If you want to fool that there doctor, you start cultivatin' a few blisters right where your fingers jines onto your palms. And another thing. You'd ought to have some of them coupons of yourn amputated. They're commencin' to fester, and fust thing you know you'll have a fine case o' scad-poisonin'. Then you're likely to lose an arm, at the very least."

CADBURY gazed at the late Mr. Henderson speculatively. By this time he had lost ninety per cent. of his fear. The old fellow sat, rather a forlorn and mournful figure, his big round shoulders drooping, his chin still resting in the palm of a knotted hand. Once Cadbury had seen that sculptured masterpiece of the great Rodin, colossal rendering of the imponderable into tangible bronze. Cadbury had considered it rather ugly, and more than a little unpleasant. It expressed so much that Cadbury was not.

There, in the pallid light of a dying fire, crouched a tenuous replica of the mortal thing Cadbury regarded as the only reality. Yet it represented the true immortal part, the reality of realities, the soul of a man. Imperfect, aslant, asymmetrical as the molded contours of its discarded clay, still with its clinging human limitations; a spirit toting the symbolic chain of uncomplete enfranchisement, seeking with a kind of pitiful bravado to re-weave those long-severed ties of mortality, there sat the imperishable but weary Ego, resting by the wayside in its quest of the Unfulfilled.

"I'm not so sure," said Cadbury. "You're kind and generous in what you say, Mr. Henderson. But I don't know. I have a feeling it's you who—who need something."

"NOW listen to that," cried the phantom. "Who ever heard the like. Here's a mortal human bein,' instead of runnin' off or percolatin' of my system with rocksalt or road-buildin' material, offers to help a feller. I'd ought to call a meetin' of our Local and pass resolutions. Well, well, ain't it real heart-warmin'! It's an ill rainstorm that don't water somebody's cabbages. Son, what in your opinion would you cal'late you could do to make my nonexistence more peaceful and riotous with enjoyment? Seein' as how 'stone walls do not a prison make nor iron bars a cage,' considered either as a person on the outside lookin' in or vicious verses, there wouldn't seem to be no limitations as to how peripatetic and meddlesome I can be, even among the homes of our most notorious and respected citizens.

"In other words, I can share the humble habitations of the rich and wicked or the luxurious dwellin's of the poor laborin' man who hain't hardly got time enough left from his six-hour day to put a new coat of varnish on his limmy-seen."

"Yes, but you say they all avoid you."

"Yep."

"So if there was anything any one could do, you haven't much chance to say what it is, unless you go to a medium; and I gather you haven't much confidence in them."

"Well, can you blame me? They have funny ideas, mediums. A ghost ain't anxious to be made a holy show of, jest to entertain a lot of lunatics settin' around in a dark room a-holdin' of each other's hands. Do you cal'late it flatters a self-respectin' ghost to be asked to write a message on a slate with red flannel trimmin', like a schoolboy? Is that dignified? Medium I knowed a while back invited me to an evenin' party where I was expected to make a table do a jig. All poppycock! Thinks I, if she wants this here table to hop round, she's jest as strong in the arms as I be. Let her do her own table-joggin'! Yes, sirree! I didn't pay no more attention to her. Maybe she got some non-union spirit to help out her old see-aunts. Not me!"

The specter sniffed contemptuously.

"But—when you—er—severed your mortal ties, didn't you—wasn't there some little thing—left undone that——"

"Ah!" cried Solomon Henderson-that-

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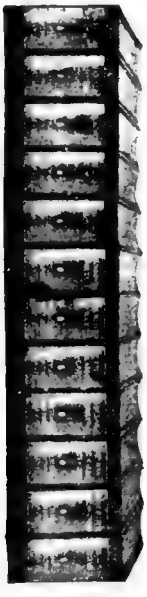

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had-been, rising suddenly and standing with his back to the tiny fire. He clasped his big hands under his coat-tails, and rocked slowly to and fro on heels and toes, pursing his lips meditatively, his grizzled head cocked on one side. Nate Cadbury pulled one fat leg athwart the other, and sat holding the raised knees by the stress of his interlocked fingers. He looked up at the tall old phantom expectantly.

"Aha!" repeated Solomon. "You've hit on somethin'. I was a-goin' to mention it, but I thought I'd wait and see if you wouldn't think of it. Gosh! I'm one of the luckiest spirits I ever heered of. You're jest the feller I be'n lookin' for."

"You—you don't say!" returned Cadbury. "You really mean there's something——"

"Sartin sure! Nathan'l, do you believe you could manage to put a new coat o' white-lead paint on this old house, and a few panes o' glass where the boys has stoned out the old ones, and fix up the flower-garden, and head back them apple-trees so's't they won't all run to ruin? You never tasted apples in your life no better'n my Northern Spies and Nodheads and late Bald'ins, but lawsy! What with them boys knockin' the fruit off with stones and clubs in the fall and neglect and cattypillows the rest o' the year, them trees is abs'lutely no' count.

"My Hetty—guess you didn't know my Hetty, Nathan'l. She set a powerful store by the flowers, or she did 'til—'til our fambly broke up. Way my wife's treated her's been a shame. Did you know my wife married Old Si Gransit, over Lewisburg way, less'n eight months after I was took off? Lives over thar now. Hetty was only a little gal——"

"I know," said Cadbury. The story was far from new to him. Henderson had been a farmer, fairly thrifty, never considered well-to-do. Victim of an accident in the hayfield, he had left a wife and little girl, and when with almost indecent haste the widow had remarried, reports of a stepfather's cruelty were not slow in gaining circulation. Afterward, years afterward, had come rumors that the girl, grown to young womanhood, had run away.

"IT WA'N'T to do any harm, or scare folks, I come back to this place," said Solomon. "It was my home, our home. Hetty loved it, though maybe her mother didn't. I was goin' to do wonders with it. I was a hard-workin' foreseein' man in them days, and I hadn't no other object in life but to make this home comf'table and nice. Look at it now!

"M' wife, she left it right away. Tried to sell it, and would of; but land sakes! Nobody'd buy it. Somehow it'd leaked out it was ha'nted. S'pose it was my fault. I'd oughter kep' away. She managed to dispose o' the land, all except right around the house. People is funny. In a couple of years the place look so run down it was hopeless. Ain't anyt n' more pitiful, I cal'late, than a house that's be'n lived in, that's be'n a happy, comf'table home to honest, well-meanin' folks, jest fallin' to pieces like this one.

"Even now, it'd make some one a nice place. The old road ain't the main line, like it used to be when the stage went past here. But fer a feller that wanted to keep a few chickens, and have fresh vegetables and flowers, and apples enough to sell fer a profit—it could be did, too, in a couple of years, with the city markets cryin' for fruit—it'd be jest the ticket. Good place to raise a family o' children, too.

"Didn't I use to set and dream what this place was a-goin' to look like when I got it fixed as I wanted it? Well, say! It would of amounted to somethin'! Me and my Hetty—she was eight years old—aw, what's the use? What's a poor ghost a-goin' to do anyhow, a h'antin' around like some tramp, eatin' of his heart out when he'd ought to be happy considerin' all the advantages he's got—plenty o' time and space and nothin' much to do excep' rattle a chain once in a while and groan a little to keep up appearances. Nathan'l, do you s'pose you could fix up this place a leetle tiny mite? That'd be somethin', jest so's it wouldn't be an eyesore. It wouldn't be like my Hetty a havin' of it, but land o' Goshen! It'd be a turrible comfort!"

CADBURY detected his companion brushing away a furtive and spectral tear with one knobby hand. He did not remember having been stirred in all his life with an impulse of such genuine pity.

"Don't you worry any more, Mr. Henderson," he blurted. "Don't you worry. I'll do—do—what I can!"

"You will? Well, now that'll be elegant! Nathan'l, I take back all I said about you not havin' no spunk. I guess you've got the makin's of a real nice man in you.

"Folks don't understand us ghosts, anyhow. They think as soon as a party steps out, he's all right or all wrong. If he's in heaven, he's happy; if he's gone t'other way, he's gittin' what he deserved. In either case, they stop inquirin' for his health any more. It surprises 'em awful to have this canceled individual come botherin' around; and instead of askin' him polite what they can do for him, and ain't it a nice day, though cold for the time of year, they run away or try to bounce solid substances off'n him, as the case may be.

"The main trouble with ghosts is unfinished jobs. If it's women, why they worry about the children they left half brung up. If it's men, they think about a railroad they was buildin' or goin' to build, or a nation they was cuttin' out a suit of civilization for, or maybe a new front porch for the little house under the ellum tree. A man that wouldn't leggo the plow in the field on the best fishin' day that ever was, gits yanked into eternity behind a runaway hoss or bit by some midget of a mike robe, and it's all over but the prayer and the floral piller. He ain't consulted which field he would of sowed to alfalfa and which to oats next season, or whether the engineers had better plan to tunnel Pike's Peak or bridge the Grand Can Yon. And he hain't got no way of makin' known his wishes from now on henceforth, amen. Do you blame 'em for snoopin' round, and kind of broodin' over things that meant a heap to 'em once? They wouldn't be human if they didn't, Nathan'l; they wouldn't be human."

"Don't you worry," said Cadbury warmly. "Don't you worry about this place."

A tear trickled down the plump coward's own cheek.

"You could sell it if you wanted to,"

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said the wraith of Solomon Henderson. "If folks see it's bein' painted up a little and that there's one person that ain't scared of a poor old harmless ghost, maybe they'll git over their foolishness. And Nathan'l, so fur's I'm concerned, I promise on my honor I won't never show myself round here agin. I might take a look, once in a while, but no one'll ever know it. I'll do my reg'lar ha'ntin' round some president of a milk company that's be'n profiteerin' while little babies in cities was wastin' f'r want o' nourishment."

Cadbury looked up at the rugged features of the phantom, the heavy brows crowned with gray hair, the craggy, powerful nose, the firm and hirsute jaw. In the deep-set eyes he saw the sorrows of the ages, the ineffable longing of all the great world of those who once were mortals to spin again ever so thin a web of contact between themselves and things mundane, things of ambition and things about which their affections persistently cling. Yet there was, in Henderson's brooding eyes, a measure of content.

"Save us and keep us!" he exclaimed, pulling out a bulky silver watch.

"It's time for me to be goin'. Good-by, Nathan'l! Remember, a trade's a trade!"

He held out a large though diaphanous hand, through which the outlines of the bricks in the chimneyplace were distinctly visible. Nevertheless, Cadbury sought to lay hold upon this hand in token of agreement.

His fingers closed upon thin air; and because he had thrown himself impulsively forward and now met with none of the expected resistance, he fell with a crash. His head thumped violently the side of the fireplace, and he rolled sprawling upon the dusty floor, seeking to avoid contact with the hot coals.

But the coals were not hot. Cadbury sat up, fingering the bruised spot on his head. The fire had died and the bricks were cold. So was Cadbury. He shivered and rubbed his arms, legs and back, which were stiff and almost intolerably lame.

Across the floor, from each of the two windows in the eastern wall, streamed a great shining path of golden sunshine. The room was bright with it, in spite of the dirt-encrusted panes. His fall had stirred up some dust, which now danced in a brilliant, impalpable bar from window to floor.

OUTSIDE arose the rich morning chorus of innumerable birds, a chorus that pulsed in a world of vivid life. Cadbury got painfully to his feet. There was misery in his body, but—somehow—exultation in his soul. It was the morning of a new day.

He stepped out into the front yard. The tempest had given place to a soft June breeze, heavy with the scent of blossoms. Pools of rain-water mirrored the bluest of skies and the greenest of vegetation. In the heart of Cadbury rose like a tide the joy that he was alive. What mattered the lame back or sore head? What mattered Dunning's gloomy prognostics?

Nathaniel Cadbury stepped into the old stage road and trudged limpingly but triumphantly toward Cataract and the boarding-house that should shelter him but a little while longer. He was a man born again.

IV

THE rehabilitation of the old Solomon Henderson place was cause for raised eyebrows and shaking heads for a period considerably exceeding the allotted nine days for such wonders. Had Nate Cadbury gone crazy? Well, he had been a pretty weak sister all his life, anyhow; every one knew that.

Nate had paid up the back taxes and been given a deed of the property at the county court-house. Then he had invested largely in lumber, paint, putty, nails, glass and innumerable other materials of home-building. A truck made numerous trips from town out the old stage road with these and other supplies.

"That lunatic is doing most of the work himself," said one of the observant citizens of Cataract, who motored quite casually past the weatherbeaten house. "He's wearing overalls, and climbing up and down ladders, and spilling paint by the hogshead. Looks like he meant to build a wide piazza clear across the front. Wouldn't wonder if he'd manage to make the old place quite attractive. What do you suppose he's figuring on?"

"Probably expects to sell it at a profit. He's got a new bug. Thinks he's making money."

"Poor Nate! Guess he'd have played safe to keep his money tied up in bonds, as he always has done. Looks as if he showed good judgment that time he decided not to buy a partnership in Joe Greenleaf's shoe-store."

"Well, the funny thing is, he's living in that old house, and *staying there alone nights!* Can you beat it?"

"What? Nate Cadbury sleeping by himself in the most notorious haunted house in the State? Don't make me laugh!"

"All right, believe it or not, as you please. I'm telling you he is doing just that. Oh, well, of course it's all fish about that old Henderson ghost. No one with any sense believes such rot."

"Funny a few folks didn't find it out sooner, instead of letting Nate Cadbury get the property from the county for practically nothing."

"Oh, guess no one wanted it. Too out of the way."

"Poor Nate" Cadbury, clambering up and down ladders, bossing the workmen whom he employed to revamp the house, spraying apple-trees, whitewashing chicken-houses—"poor Nate" was nearer happy than he had ever been in his life. Happy and, in truth, lonely. But he wasn't afraid. In time he got the inside of the old house scrubbed, sand-papered, painted and papered. He put in new plumbing, a big wood-burning furnace, a refrigerator.

With a farmer up the road, who owned a small ice-house on the shore of a pond, Nate arranged for ice. He bought a cow and learned to milk her. As the season advanced, he began to get new peas, beans and other vegetables from his garden. With plenty of eggs, milk, garden-sass, what more could he want? He bought him a little car and made frequent trips to town. Always on the road he saluted passers cheerily.

"What's got into Nate, anyhow?" demanded his friends. "He's a human being. Looks like a man, instead of a halibut.

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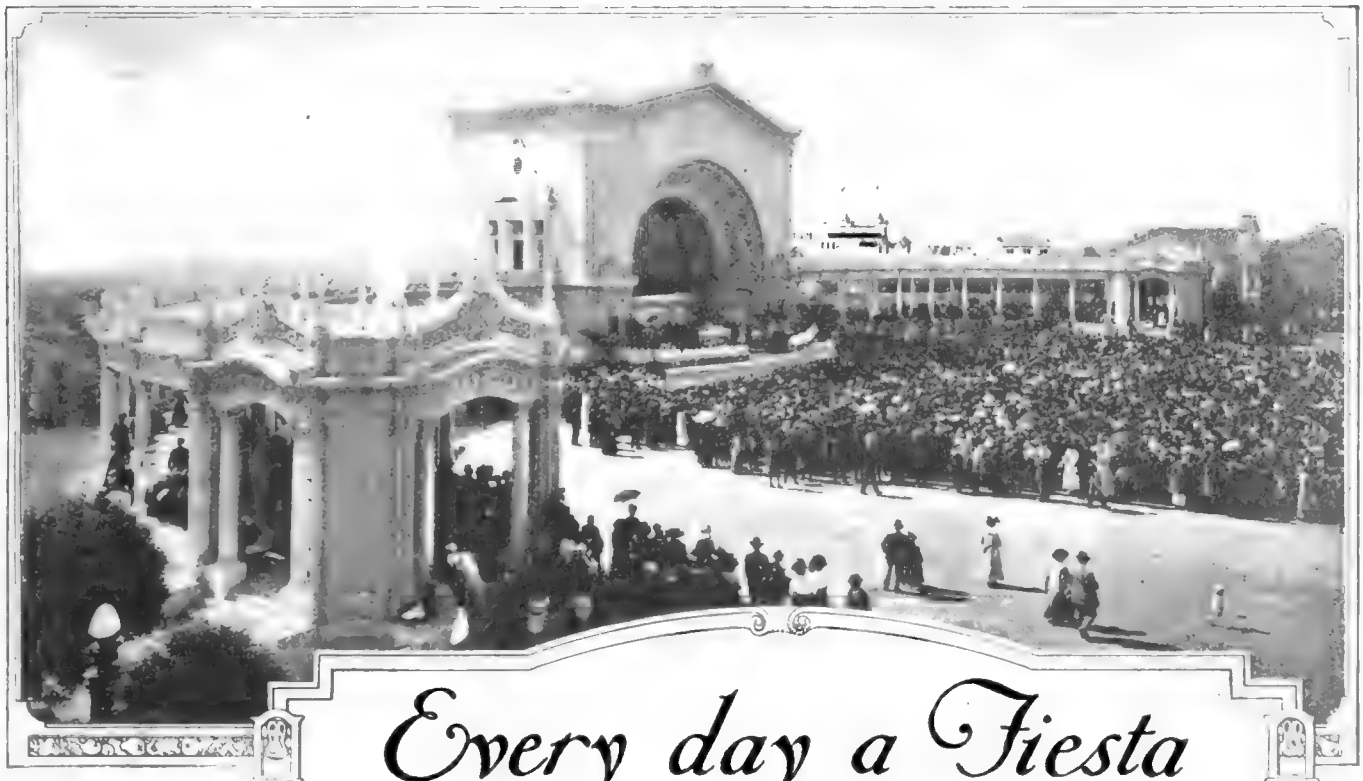

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How in the devil he manages to exist out there alone—I give it up."

Nate gave it up. That is to say, he went to Mrs. Mindle's boarding-house and hunted up old Mrs. Prout. Old Mrs. Prout was living miserably upon the proceeds of her late husband's pension, which barely sufficed to keep her board-bill paid. She was a cherry soul considerably past three score, looking forward hopefully to the time when she should exit respectably, and putting up with her troubles without burdening other folks with them.

"Mrs. Prout," said Nate, in the parlor of the Mindle boarding-house, where at least a million dollars' worth of rutabaga turnips had been cooked over a period sufficient to insure the saturation of even the wall-paper with their sturdy effluvium, "Mrs. Prout, will you please put on your bonnet and cloak and come for a little ride with me?"

Mrs. Prout allowed that she hadn't been invited to ride in any one's motor-car for half a generation, and she'd be just delighted. Nate conveyed Mrs. Prout to the renovated Henderson property which he now called home.

"Mercy!" said the old lady. "This is a treat! I've had the most awful curiosity to know all about it. Goodness, Nate! It's pretty here. What lovely wall-paper! Tell me, that's a good boy, where do you keep the ghost?"

"Never you mind about that ghost, Mrs. Prout. There wasn't only one. There were several——"

"Why, Nate!"

Mrs. Prout looked startled.

"Fact. Oh, I don't mean in this house, but in me. I was full of so many ghosts I made poor old Sol Henderson look meek and harmless. He was, too. I'm not saying there never was any ghost of Solomon Henderson either, Mrs. Prout. Don't you run away with the idea that this house wasn't haunted when I first stepped across this threshold. But it isn't now."

"But whose ghost besides Henderson's——"

"Fear! That was the father of 'em all. They were always bobbing up in my way and shaking their grisly locks at me. For instance, there was the ghost of business timidity. It scared me out of a commercial career. There was the ghost of ill health. I worried myself into a disease Dunning said was killing me. Look at me now and tell me if you think I'm going into a decline. And if I were, do you think I'd be *afraid?* I'd be sorry, because life looks good. But I wouldn't be *frightened!* I'd hate to think of quitting, though, with so many things unfinished.

"Now, Mrs. Prout, how do you like it?"

"Oh, Nate Cadbury, you don't have to ask me."

"All right. You come out here and keep house for me. I don't want to live here all alone this winter, but it will certainly be a mighty comfortable place. I'm a kind of confirmed batch. This place is the thing that makes life interesting to me. You're stuck in that horrible boarding-house. It almost killed me; I wonder you can stand it. You can have all the eggs and milk and cream and butter you want to cook with, and I'll just be a nice settled-down old-maid son to you. Try it for one winter, will you, Mrs. Prout?"

And so Mrs. Mindle lost another boarder.

V

AGAIN a June storm beat its fists against the old Henderson place. Again strong summer lightnings racketed from black sky to green earth, and again floods of rain fell resonantly upon shingle and clapboard.

And once more in that capacious fireplace burned a small and cheerful fire to counteract the chill of a still cool month of roses. Nate Cadbury sat reading some government report or other concerning the use of incubators in the hatching of duck-eggs.

Mrs. Prout thrust a wrinkled face through the door that led to the kitchen. The ruddy lamplight shone pleasantly upon her good-humored countenance and reflected from her gold-rimmed spectacles.

Nate, from his place by the center-table, looked up.

"Scared?" asked Mrs. Prout.

"Scared nothing," said Nate. "But I was just thinking. It was one year ago to-night that I first stepped inside this house. And it was the same kind of night. Funny coincidence."

"Real funny. I'm settin' my bread, Nate. My goodness! That was a heavy clap of thunder!"

The old lady winced, but retired courageously to the kitchen. The rumbling diminished a trifle, though the rain still dashed in torrents against the glass.

Suddenly Nate Cadbury started, and turned questioningly toward the front door. Then, in two steps, he cleared the intervening space and drew the door inward. A strong gust of wind made both lamp and fireplace flare and smoke.

"I—just came up on your—piazza," said a voice, "to wait until the rain lessens—if—if you don't mind."

The voice was a young woman's, of pleasant timbre, perhaps a little sad, as of one who had known trouble.

"Oh, don't stay out there," cried Nate. "Come right in. Did it catch you? I heard your footsteps on the boards—Why, you're drenched!"

The woman entered with an odd reluctance. She was presumably less than thirty, though not far short of it. Plainly, even somberly dressed, she impressed Nate as one upon whom maturity sat not altogether lightly. And withal, there was about her something anxiously ill at ease, as if she doubted her welcome.

"I'll call Mrs. Prout," he said. "You shall have some dry clothes, or at least a cup of hot tea. Here, stand close to the fire."

He laid on more wood, and the woman stood back to the leaping blaze, her hands clasped behind her to catch the warmth. Her face was—yes, beautiful, for it was marked with a transparent goodness and a sort of heroic strength. The eyes, just a trifle deep-set, were lustrous with intelligence—gray, true eyes looking honestly upon a world from which they demanded nothing more than a fair deal.

Her nose was less than masculine in its dominance, but only by a narrow margin. It was a nose that told of fine parentage, a self-respecting and independent nose, well turned and matching the eyes for intelligence. Below it curved a mouth in which lay much of the beauty of the woman's face, a tender and understanding mouth, with lips full-modeled and sensitive above a round chin, made winsome with an accurately placed dimple.

The rain had wet the girl's hair, which now clung about her face, but not in sad strings. It was that peculiar hair that some women have which dampness fills with a soft and lustrous waviness. So, in spite of a shabby hat made more shabby by its drenching, and in spite of a coat, not too new, of some dark fabric made rusty thr gh much exposure, the face was a face of ely and serene distinction.

] te Cadbury's call brought Mrs. Prout.

"This young lady," said he, "will stay here until the rain lets up. Don't you think you can bring her something hot?"

"Oh, my dear!" cried the old woman. "How wet you are. Take your coat right off this minute. And your shoes, too ;I'll get you some slippers."

The girl removed her coat, but declined slippers.

"It doesn't matter," she said. "I'm stopping up the road at Mrs. Goold's. I thought I should get back before the shower, but it was too quick for me. I suppose it will soon be over."

"These summer showers stretch into long storms sometimes," said Nate. "Anyhow, I'll see that you get safely to Mrs. Goold's. I've a flivver, so that will be easy. You have only to step off the front of the piazza right into the car, and hardly a drop will touch you."

Mrs. Prout had retired into the kitchen. As Nate talked, he scrutinized his guest with a stare almost discourteous. What was it, aside from her attractiveness, which chained his attention? She was allowing her eyes to wander about the snug room, and in them was a patent eagerness. Her glance fell on a great jar of early June flowers.

"You have—have a flower-garden?" she asked. "Did those come from your own bushes? They are beautiful—and old-fashioned, aren't they?"

"I know you!" suddenly cried Nate Cadbury. "I couldn't tell at first what it was—but now I know you! You're Hetty Henderson."

The girl, startled by his abruptness, looked up, wide-eyed. Now she smiled a slow, warm smile.

"Yes," she said. "I'm Hetty Henderson. I used to live in this house. It wasn't like this, though. If my father had lived, it——"

"If your father had lived, it would have been much like this, without a doubt."

The swiftness of his agreement surprised Hetty Henderson.

"But how—why, did you know my father, Mr. Cadbury? He died when you were—well, hardly more than a child."

"About sixteen. But I remember him—quite distinctly."

"But you never saw me, did you?"

"I think not. I knew you because you are like your father."

Mrs. Prout bustled in with the tea.

"This," said Nate, "is Miss Henderson, Mrs. Prout. The house was once her father's."

"Mercy sakes!" said Mrs. Prout. She looked almost as if she had seen a ghost. "And on this, of all nights, Nate Cadbury. What do you think of that?"

"Sit down, Miss Hetty," said Nate. Hetty sank into a chair at the side of the fireplace, and Nate dropped into one facing

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her. Mrs. Prout bustled out again to her kitchen, and Nate presently heard the thump, thump of a flatiron with which she was vigorously smoothing napkins.

"Mrs. Prout was startled," he explained, "because it was just a year ago to-night that I first entered this house. Rather a coincidence."

Hetty sipped her hot tea, while Nate watched her with a kind of hunger. The rain fell as violently as ever, some big drops finding their way down the chimney-flue and spatting among the coals.

"I hope," continued Nate, "I don't wake up!"

"What an odd remark, Mr. Cadbury!"

"Will you tell me something about yourself?" he went on. "Where have you been? Have you married? You don't live very near here, or I should have heard of you."

"Why, there isn't anything to tell," replied Hetty, confused by the directness of his attack. "I'm a school-teacher, and I'm not married, and I live in Boston."

"Did you—did you ever love this old place?" demanded Nate.

"Yes, I was fond of it, when I was little. My father and I were chums. We used to plan how we would——"

She stopped and sipped her tea again. In her downcast eyes was all the eloquence of words and an involuntary sigh said plainly enough:

"Oh, what's the use?"

"You see," said Nate, "this place is really yours, Miss Henderson. No one knew where you were. You ran away from your stepfather's abuse, didn't you?"

"Yes; and until two weeks ago people about here did not know anything of me. I came back to spend my vacation among the hills, and—but what do you mean, Mr. Cadbury? This isn't and never was my house."

"I paid only the taxes to get possession," said Nate. "You are morally entitled to it. I—I've just been doing this—er—restoring, and all, to amuse myself. It was—a wish of your father's."

"I don't understand at all."

"No, you wouldn't. Some time I'll tell you. But the work and the interest have brought back my health—maybe saved my life. The place owes me nothing—and I owe everything, everything in the world, to Solomon Henderson."

"The place is legally yours, Mr. Cadbury. What could I ever have done with it, in the state you found it in a year ago?"

"Let me take your cup," said Nate, rising. "Have you seen the place in the daytime?"

"Oh yes, and it's charming. The roses——"

"All yours," Nate assured her. He went into the kitchen with the empty cup. He was the soul of kindness. A manly man, too, sturdily built, brown with outdoor living, vigorous, not unmasterful. Mrs. Goold had told Hetty something of Nate's acquisition of her father's old home, perhaps more about Nate than was quite necessary. Now Hetty looked in vain for signs of that indecision, that characterlessness, that attached in Mrs. Goold's mind to the name Cadbury.

Nate returned and sat down.

"Do you mind if I smoke?" he asked. He filled and lighted a pipe. To Hetty Henderson he seemed the type of domestic masculinity, and a mighty engaging type into the bargain.

"Your mother hasn't any rights that I care to consider," said Nate, "because she was unkind to you. The county took the property for taxes, and offered it many times for sale, but there never were any bidders. There was a story——"

He glanced sidewise over his pipe bowl.

"I heard about it."

"That was why no one wanted the house. But I—I got a notion—I had a vision of it, you may say, as it ought to look. And—I knew that you were somewhere, Miss Hetty. I knew you would come back. I long ago made up my mind what I should do when you did come back. But I—I must say I didn't for a moment realize what you were going to look—to be like."

Something in his tone caused Hetty to look up suddenly, and when she sensed the full import of his gaze, she turned a slow crimson. Spinsters of twenty-eight don't look for romance in chance-sought cottages where they are driven by thunder-squalls. Hetty Henderson, nevertheless, came upon it in the atmosphere of this old home of hers, with its crackling hearth fire and the lamp on the reading-table surrounded by books on every subject from philosophy to ensilage. The eyes of Nathaniel Cadbury—

"Doesn't it seem as if the rain is letting up a little, Mr. Cadbury?" she asked.

"Once there was a man," said Nate, rising and drawing briskly on his pipe, "who went away leaving an unfinished job. I believe Fate sent me along to complete it for him. Now I find that Fate has some further plans for me. But to carry out those plans, I shall have to have help."

NATE opened a closet door and took out several overgarments of which he selected one and placed it across the shoulders of his guest. She looked up appreciatively and thanked him. Her heart was showing signs of gross insubordination. Cadbury went to the kitchen door.

"I'm going to get the car and take Miss Henderson up the road," he said to Mrs. Prout. "I won't be long."

Then he went out, and presently Hetty heard the hum of the motor outside. She stepped upon the porch pulling the front door into place behind her, and crossed to where Nate stood, holding aside the curtains of his car.

"It's a nice little home," he said, gaining his place beside her and letting in the clutch. The wheels sang moistly in the soft mud of the road and the rain drummed a tune of a single note on the waterproof top. "Only needs one thing to make it complete."

"I didn't miss anything," doubted Hetty.

"No," replied Nate. "You wouldn't, because you're *it*."

"Please, Mr. Cadbury, that nonsense about your not owning the place must stop."

"It's going to," said Nate. "Will you come down to-morrow and see my white Wyandotte chickens? All right; I'll drive up the road and get you."

He delivered his passenger safely at the Goolds' front door, and all the way home, as he pierced the downpour with the twin beams of his headlights, he sang loudly a wordless improvisation that made up in spirit what it lacked in harmony.

Abandoned in the Labyrinth of the Dead

He bent over the lantern. Suddenly the catacombs were plunged into darkness. From that vast burial cavern there was one chance in two thousand of escape.

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The STORY of HOOVER

(*Continued from page 22*)

Herbert, and the other a girl, Mary, who was very much younger. Theodore, like his younger brother, became a mining engineer, and after a dozen years of professional and business experience with mines all over the world—part of the time in connection with mining interests directed by his brother—is now the head of the graduate department of mining engineering in Stanford University.

After the father's and mother's death, the three Hoover orphans came under the kindly care of various Quaker aunts and uncles, and especially at first of Grandmother Minthorne. This good grandmother took special charge of little Mary, and pretty soon carried her with her out to Oregon, where she had a son and daughter living. There had been a little property left when the father died, enough to provide a very slender income for each child, perhaps as much—or as little we should think it now—as twenty-five dollars a month for each. But father Jesse had had a partner in the most lucrative side of his business, that of the selling of agricultural implements, and in the settling up of father Jesse's affairs most of the proceeds from the disposal of that part of the business seemed to belong to this partner. Also, the other patrimony gradually dwindled by reason of unfortunate investments of it, so the orphans were almost from the beginning partly, at least, dependent on the charity of the Quaker relatives.

But these relatives were not limited to Iowa, and the boy Herbert soon found himself in a new and strange environment, surrounded by a different race of human beings, whose red-brown skin and fantastic trappings greatly excited his boyish wonder and imagination. For he was sent to live with his Uncle Laban Miles, U. S. Government Indian Agent for the Osage tribe in the Indian Territory, who was one of the many Quakers who had dedicated their lives to the cause of the Indians at that time. Here the boy Herbert came to know the original Americans, and he seems to have been very happy during the six or eight months spent here, for he was kindly cared for by his uncle and aunt, and he had good times playing with their children, his little cousins. One of them, Harriet Miles, later a teacher in the University of Kansas, and still later in Stanford University, was of about his own age. To this cousin he has always remained particularly devoted. And there were always the strange and wonderful red people to watch and wonder about.

Herbert Lives Among the Indians

HE REMEMBERS one special source of wonderment. He saw one day an Indian squaw lying under a tree with a newborn babe in her arms. Where had it come from? He finally decided that it must have come from the tree; hence the logical deduction that all Indian babies come from trees. And in those days and among those Quaker mentors of his, there was no one to explain.

But his life among the original Americans was interrupted by the consulting aunts and uncles, who, realizing that an abundance of barbarians and a paucity of schools might not be the best of surroundings for a child coming to its first years of understanding, decided on bringing him back into a more civilized and Quakerish environment; at least one less marked by tomahawks, bows and arrows and other tangible suggestions of a most un-Quakerish manner of life.

So he was sent back to Iowa, where he lived for two very happy years in the home of Uncle Allan Hoover. To this uncle, and to his wife, Aunt Millie, the impressionable boy became strongly attached. And there were some energetic young cousins always on hand to play with. The older brother Theodore, or Tad, was living at this time with another uncle, a prosperous Iowa farmer, also much loved by both of the boys. He lived not too far away to prevent frequent playings together of the two, and on another farm with Grandmother Minthorne, was still the baby sister Mary, who was, however, too young to be much of a playmate for the brothers. Indeed, the country all around bristled with the kindly uncles and aunts and other relatives and playmates, all interested in making life comfortable and happy for the little orphans.

Happy Childhood Days

THERE was also an especially attractive little black-eyed girl, Mildred Brook, who lived on a near-by farm, who later went to the same Quaker academy at Oskaloosa as Theodore, and is now Mrs. Theodore Hoover. In those days she was known as "Mildred of the berry-patches," as all the children for miles around associated her in their minds with the luxuriant vines on the farm of her Uncle Bransomé with whom she lived. Her home was the children's Mecca in the berry season.

Herbert Hoover's memories of those days are filled with lively incidents and boyish farm adventure. There was the young calf, mutual property of himself and a cousin of like age, which was fitted out with a boy-made harness and trained to work, eventually getting out of hand in a corn field and dragging the single-shovel cultivator wildly across and along rows of tender growing grain. Later the calf was restored to favor when it was triumphantly attached to a boy-made sorghum mill, which actually worked, and pressed out the sweet juice from the sorghum cane.

Winter had its special joys of skates and sled; spring came with maple-sugaring, and summer with its long days filled with a thousand enterprises. There were fish in the creek which you might catch if you could sit still long enough, without too violent wiggling of the hook when the float gave its first faint indications of a bite. It was two miles to school, and most of the time the children had to walk. But that was only good for them, and there was, of course, a good deal of churchgoing and daily family prayers, but there were always convenient laps for tired little heads—being in church was the necessary thing, not being awake in church.

It was a joyous and wholesome two years, and then came the end of it, and life was not so happy again for the little orphan boy of curly hair and pink cheeks that the Iowa relatives remember. For some reason apparently not very clearly remembered now, it was decided by the consulting uncles and aunts that young Herbert should go to Oregon, and join the Hoover and Minthorne relatives there. Perhaps, even probably, it was because of the presumably superior educational advantages of Oregon in the existence of the Newberg Friends' Academy and the Friends' Pacific College, that led to the decision. We may be sure that Herbert uttered no affirmative vote in the conclave that decided on his departure from the Iowa farm, and when he once got out to the superior place, he was less than ever in favor of the proceeding. But the conscientious uncles and aunts were inexorable as the Fates. Just why only Herbert and not Theodore, the elder brother, or the two of them together, went to Oregon, nobody seems now to know.

They meant to be the kindest of Fates, of course. They knew that they knew so much better than the little boy what was best for him. And probably they did. But this little pawn on the chessboard of life, moved about with ever so excellent intention by firm and confident hands, must have thought sometimes that he would have liked to have some little part in deciding these moves. But if one starts as pawn, one must find the way as pawn clear across the board to the king-row before one can come to the higher estate of the nobler pieces.

The actual going from Iowa to far-away Oregon was not so unbearable, because of the excitement of the tremendous journey and the actual fun of it. It was not made, to be sure, as young Herbert would have preferred it, in a long train of picturesque schooners, drawn up in a circle each night to repel attacking Indians, as his story-books described all transcontinental journeys; but in an overfull tourist-car on the railroad. Herbert's most vivid memories of the week's journey are of the wonderful lunch baskets and boxes filled with fried chicken, boiled hams and roast meats, and countless pies and layer-cakes, caraway-seed cookies, and great red apples. Herbert Hoover had no food troubles in those days!

On to Another Uncle

ARRIVED in Oregon he found himself planted in the family of Uncle John Minthorne, his mother's brother, a country doctor of Newberg, the seat of the two superior educational institutions. And he did not like it. Uncle John did not live on a farm, but on the edge of a small town, which was a mistake, according to Herbert's way of looking at it. And the Friends' Academy of Newberg, Oregon, could not be compared in interest with the district village school of West Branch, Iowa. The town boys were not nearly as much fun as the country cousins he had left.

And while the new uncle was kind, he yet was of the strict and stern type of uncle, and could not touch Uncle Allan Hoover of Iowa. The new aunt, too, he did not like very much, while he had really loved Aunt Millie. And the two girl cousins were, well—girls, and not boys—and there was always the shadow in the house, which troubled him with an ever-growing trouble, of the boy cousin who would have been just his age if he had lived—but didn't—and whose place he was

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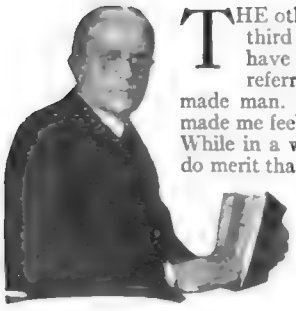
How Dr. Frank Crane Inspired My Newly Won Prosperity

By Donald Walker



THE other day was the third time that I have heard myself referred to as a self-made man. I admit it has made me feel a little proud. While in a way I suppose I do merit that reference, still I know that it is not wholly accurate. For the first time I have decided to tell the little secret I have long kept to myself—to give credit in print to the man who inspired me to become what a few of my friends are good enough to call a self-made man. First I will go back five years.

At that time I held a comfortable position in a small but growing business, and managed to support my wife and child on a small salary. I had hopes of becoming the office manager some day, but it was a big stretch for my imagination. And here I am today—but that is getting ahead of my story.

One day I heard that the office manager had resigned. I was not long confirming the rumor, for I felt that at last my opportunity had arrived. I expected any minute to be told to take the place. Several days passed, and the anticipated order did not come. Instead a new man was brought in from the outside a week later, and I confess I felt resentment in being called upon to help install him in the position that I felt should have been mine.

At first I felt like throwing up my job. I was bitter at the injustice of the thing. Why did the firm have to go outside of the organization to get a new man when I could have filled the position? I felt I had a just grievance, so I went straight into the front office and asked frankly why I had been overlooked.

That interview was something of a shock to me, because I learned that I had not even been considered for the position. I was told in all friendliness that I was standing still. To use the exact words: "Hitched to a post," and when I countered in self-defense that I knew the business thoroughly, I was told "Yes, you know all the details of the business, and it would be hard on that account to replace you, but you are not growing with the business. It is not because you are lacking in ability or willingness to work, but you don't seem to think above your work or outside of your department, and an executive must have a broader viewpoint. He must be able to think clearly and decide constructively." That most uncomfortable five minutes' interview was filled with a lot of helpful suggestions, but the only other important thing which I remember was the parting shot:

"Learn the Secret of Right Thinking and Cultivate the Habit"

I needed just that sort of a jolt to set me on the right track. But I was puzzled to know how I could cultivate the habit of right thinking. How could I get the bigger, broader viewpoint? But that came later.

I began to study men who held important positions. I discovered that without exception they were men of broad vision.

I familiarized myself with the opinions of authorities. I listened to speeches of men notable in politics and business. They all seemed to have the thing I wanted, but somehow I could not grasp how they got it.

Then one day I discovered Dr. Frank Crane. I made his acquaintance through one of the leading magazines and later learned that he contributed daily a FOUR-MINUTE ESSAY to some sixty metropolitan newspapers in the United States and Canada. I began reading him religiously, and he soon gave me the key I needed and the rest was easy. Since then there has hardly been a day that I have not read one of Dr. Crane's FOUR-MINUTE ESSAYS. And, that is not all, my wife reads and enjoys Dr. Crane just as much as I do.

I read Dr. Crane for a mental tonic. He stimulated and inspired me. His swift, keen penetration; his clear and logical analysis; his understandable conclusions were a revelation to me. I particularly liked the way he tackled every-day problems and questions. His optimism put me in good humor, and his kindliness solaced and soothed me. He saw things in a big, clear, straightforward way and his knowledge opened wide the door to me to the great minds of all ages.

It was Dr. Crane who helped me to become what I am. Without his help I might have climbed a little way up the ladder, but to my present position NEVER. Most all the good things life has given me these last five years I can trace back directly to his inspirational influence.

He taught me how to think RIGHT. He helped me to use more forceful English. He helped me to win poise, self-control, determination, concentration, and will-power. He made me more efficient in my business. And so I could go on giving tribute to the great good Dr. Crane has done for me. And, what is still more, I have met a lot of big men in the past five years who feel just as I do about Dr. Crane.

As I look back now to the time when the office managership seemed to me the pinnacle of success, I realize how tremendously Dr. Crane has widened my horizon; how infinitely more difficult success would have been without his help, and I am glad of this opportunity of publicly thanking Dr. Crane for what he has done for me.

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supposed to fill, and whose early virtues were always being contrasted with the little new boy's sad faults. These things can be tragedy, you know.

So active, country-bred, free-running little Herbert had to learn, or suffer, proper discipline. It is tradition in the present Hoover family that he suffered it more than he learned it. However Uncle John Minthorne, who is now a medical missionary somewhere in Alaska, sincerely believes that whatever Herbert Hoover has been able to make of himself has been chiefly owing to the proper bringing up he enjoyed under his watchful eye. And it is true that if the boy did not see all the benefits that Dr. John said were to accrue to him through this training, and his life generally under the ministrations of this Oregon uncle and aunt, he at least soon saw that a boy could have worse things happen to him, for they did.

"Grandfather" Miles

AFTER two or three years of life with Dr. John, young Herbert was handed over to the tender care of a certain "Grandfather" Miles, who was in reality no grandfather, nor even any real relative of his. For Dr. John, who believed in making his labors yield dollars, decided that country doctoring was not a sufficiently lucrative affair. So he gave it up to go into the land business "down in Salem," the Capital city. And as little Herbert's schooling in the academy which he was attending all the time he was living with Dr. John, could not be interrupted, he was placed in the home of this pseudo-"Grandfather" Miles on a farm just on the edge of the academy town.

This man was a hard old Quaker, who probably belonged to some distant branch of the family of the Uncle Laban Miles with whom Herbert had so happily lived in the Indian territory. He did not believe in a boy's having a percentage of the produce of his gardening; in fact, he did not believe in paying orphan boys for anything so that they might have money to spend for wicked pleasures, such as taffy and marbles. He did not believe in a boy's having any spare time for mischief between the end of school-time and bed. And he was very, oh, very, religious. He believed in the longest possible church services and the most frequent and dullest possible family prayers and ceremonies. And he did not believe in convenient laps for little sleepy heads. He believed in keeping awake in church even if you had to be pricked with pins to do it. And all of his beliefs, and his practise of them, finally led a small orphan waif in his charge to acquire a strong dislike of religious forms.

"Grandfather" Miles's discipline was not merely the stern and strict kind of Uncle John. It went much further. It made a tired little boy get up, after a violent awakening, from his first refreshing sleep after getting into bed, to go and do a forgotten minor chore. And it tried to prevent him from enjoying anything to which he might seem to be becoming too much attached.

There is a story of the boy's having got hold of an ancient and almost unworkable jig-saw, after months of surreptitious saving of little sums earned by doing odd jobs for neighbors on the way to and from school or in the noon-hour. His "bent for mechanics," inherited from his inventive father, had no chance to exercise itself on

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Grandfather Miles's farm; there were fewer implements there than on the Iowa farm; and anyway, he was not allowed to tinker with them. So he got his decrepit jig-saw secretly, and carried it home after school one night and installed it in an unused corner of the woodshed. And he visited it, and enjoyed even just looking at it, every moment he could escape from his chores.

But in only two or three days Grandfather Miles, unluckily hunting over the shed for a lost buggy-whip, stumbled upon it. The old man summoned the boy and demanded to know what the thing was. Not without pride young Herbert confessed that it was a jig-saw obtained by honest trade with Johnnie Jones. The old man was enraged. He sputtered out that he would have no contraptions of the devil about his premises to beguile lazy boys from thoughts of higher things. He would have no charge of his guilty of attaching his affections to things of the earth earthy—and he would have the junkman call to-morrow and take the jig-saw away. Then he climbed into the buggy with Grandmother Miles and drove off in a high exaltation of righteousness.

That jig-saw was all that little Herbert Hoover had just then to live for. Should he drown himself in the well, or could he possibly run away back to Iowa? But Iowa was very far away. He remembered the week's journey on the railroad. Besides, if he ran off, he could not carry his precious treasure with him, it was too big. He was a resourceful boy. That is the thing we most commonly say about him to-day as a man: he is resourceful. And he had an inspiration. He simply could not let his one treasure on earth go to the junkman. Over the woodshed was an unused loft, full of dust and cobwebs. With infinite pains and exhausting labor he got his treasure up into this loft, where he stowed it away in a dark corner, concealed by a barricade of rubbish and old grain-sacks. Then he went off to those of his chores farthest away from the scene of his mingled unhappiness and joy.

Curiously enough, the junkman never came. Perhaps Grandfather Miles was so exalted that a trivial earthly thing like a jig-saw escaped his memory. Perhaps he told the junkman to come and he in his turn forgot it. Anyway, he never came The little boy went around for days with his heart in his throat, and tears ready to spring from his eyes, even with his little fists doubled up ready to fight for his jig-saw. Sometimes at night the anguish of his soul and the anxiety for his treasure kept him awake, and he would steal out to the fearsome dark loft and cuddle his joy, still safe under the old grain-sacks.

Young Herbert Runs Away

BUT the days went by and the junkman never came. The jig-saw remained in his possession. But he could only look at it and fondle it; never mend it or run it. And so, what with this and all the other things of unhappiness, he did finally run away. He left all the kind uncles and aunts and less kind pseudo-grandfathers and grandmothers and came alone into the world to wrestle with it. And he has wrestled mightily with it ever since. He was about fourteen years old then; he is forty-five now.

Two or three things ought to be mentioned in connection with this great enterprise

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You Leave a Film to Mar Them

Millions know that teeth brushed daily still discolor and decay. This is the reason for it:

There forms on the teeth a slimy film. You can feel it with your tongue. It clings to teeth, enters crevices and stays. Brushing in the usual way leaves much of it intact. It may do a ceaseless damage. And most tooth troubles are now traced to film.

That film is what discolors—not the teeth. It is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth to cause decay.

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Film-coated teeth are cloudy and unclean. So dental science has for years sought a way to combat film. That way has now been found. Able authorities have proved it by careful tests. And leading dentists all over America are now urging its adoption.

We Now Apply Active Pepsin

This film combatant is embodied in a dentifrice called Pepsodent. And a 10-Day Tube is being sent for home test to everyone who asks.

Pepsodent is based on pepsin, the digestant of albumin. The film is albuminous matter. The object of Pepsodent is to dissolve it, then to day by day combat it.

Only lately has this method been made possible. Pepsin must be activated and the usual agent is an acid harmful to the teeth. But science has now discovered a harmless activating method. And that method now enables us to fight that film with pepsin.

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Surprises

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Some morning serve Puffed Rice or Corn Puffs in this way:

After crisping, douse with melted butter. Then add your cream and sugar.

It will taste like a dish of confections. And men enjoy it just as much as children.

Add Puffed Rice to your fruit dish—any fruit. Fruit tastes best with some flimsy crust. That's why we have pies, tarts and shortcakes.

These fragile, nut-like bubbles add that crust. After a test you will never omit them.

For supper, float Puffed Wheat in milk. These are whole-wheat bubbles toasted. They are four times as porous as bread.

Children need whole wheat. They need the minerals in the outer coats. Served in this way they will revel in it.

After school surprise the children with these tidbits:

Douse Corn Puffs or Puffed Rice with melted butter. Let them eat like popcorn. Children can eat these grain dainties to their hearts' content—they so easily digest.

Scatter Puffed Rice or Corn Puffs like nut-meats on ice cream. A famous restaurant in Chicago first suggested this.

Puffed Rice is also used like nut-meats in home candy making—to make the candy porous, light and nutty.

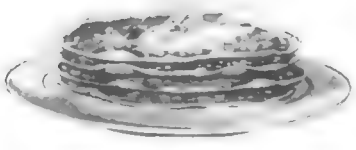
Puffed Wheat **Puffed Rice** **Corn Puffs**

Also Puffed Rice Pancake Flour

All steam exploded—puffed to eight times normal size. Every food cell blasted by Prof. Anderson's process, so digestion is easy and complete.

These are the greatest grain foods in existence and you should know them all.

Like Pancakes Made With Nuts



Now we make a pancake flour containing ground Puffed Rice. It makes the pancakes fluffy and gives a nut-like flavor. The flour is self-raising, so you simply add milk or water. You never tasted pancakes such as folks make with Puffed Rice Pancake Flour.

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of running away. First, by his experience in earning money to buy the jig-saw he had learned that he could do something toward making his own living. Second, Grandfather Miles was strangely inactive about pursuing him and bringing him back. The explanation of this may lie in the fact that about this time another uncle, Uncle Marshall, had discovered by a process of reasoning, not peculiar to him alone in Oregon, that prune-growing was the one absolutely sure road to untold wealth. He had, with the familiar first success of the convinced believer, induced various other uncles and Grandmother Minthorne to join him in an extensive prune-growing project, and had decided, undoubtedly in all sincerity, that he could confer no greater benefit on the Hoover orphans than by investing what little was left of their patrimony, together with his own money, in furthering this promising venture. However, Uncle Marshall also, alas, like many another convinced believer, had overlooked certain practical matters connected with his laudable endeavor. In fact, he found it not an entirely simple process to convert potential prunes into actual dollars, and to make a sad story short, it may be abruptly said that the whole project went to pot. And so there was no more money to pay Grandfather Miles as partial recompense for his boarding and lodging of young Herbert. It is just possible that the disappearance of young Herbert's money cooled the ardor of Grandfather Miles's pursuit of the young runaway.

The "Mining Man's" Influence

ALSO a difference of opinion had arisen between young Herbert and his Quaker uncles and aunts with regard to the future course of his education. They took it quite as a matter of course that from the little Quaker academy he would go to one of the reputable Quaker colleges of the country, such as Earlham or Swarthmore. But Herbert had come to a different idea about this matter of further education, and, as is characteristic of him, this idea had led to a decision, and the decision was on the rapid way to lead to action. In other words, Herbert had made up his mind that he wanted to study science, and for that purpose wanted to fit himself for and go to a modern scientific university. Also he wanted to be, just as soon as he possibly could, on an independent financial footing. He probably did not express these wishes, in his boy's vocabulary, by any such large mouthful of phrases; he probably said to himself, "I want to earn my own living, and go to a university where I can learn science."

Just what led him to the decision about the modern university and science is not easy for the grown-up Herbert Hoover of to-day to tell. But he is pretty sure that a large part of this determination came from the casual visit of a man whom he had never seen before, and has never seen or heard of since, but who was an old friend of his father.

This man, on his way through the town to look at a mine he owned somewhere in eastern Oregon, dropped off at Newberg so that he might see the little son of his Iowa friend. He was a "mining man," and, from the impression that Mr. Hoover still has of him, probably a mining engineer. He stayed at the local hotel for two or three days, and saw what he could of young Herbert between school-hours and chore-times. His conversation was apparently

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mostly about the difference in the work and achievements in the world of the man who had a profession and the one who had not. It was illustrated, because the speaker was a miner, by examples in the field of mining. The talk also was much about engineering in general and about just what training it was necessary for a boy to have in order to become a good engineer, with much emphasis put on the part in this training which was to be got from a university. He also explained the difference between a university and a small academy-college, even one with so fine a name as Pacific College.

And then the man went on to his mine. He invited the fascinated boy to go with him for a little visit, but permission for this was promptly denied by Grandfather Miles. The trails of this man and Herbert Hoover have never touched again, and yet this stray mining engineer, whose name, even, we do not know, almost certainly had more influence in the life of young Herbert than came from any other man.

So remembering his jig-saw and the other unhappinesses, and knowing now exactly what he wanted to do, young Herbert ran away to Portland, the great city of Oregon, and got a job in a real estate office as useful boy-of-all work, including particularly the driving of prospective purchasers about to see various alluring corner lots in town, and inviting farmsteads in the surrounding country. For his work he received sufficient wages to pay for all of his very modest living. Also he ran away at times to Salem, where he was also "in the real-estate business," more or less in connection with Uncle John's office there. When he was in Salem he lived for part of the time with Uncle John again, but mostly he took care of himself.

His Own Master

IN PORTLAND he hoped to go to the high school to prepare himself for college, but he found that he could not do this and earn his full wages at the same time. So as the wages were a first necessity, he gave up his high-school plans and devoted himself to study at nights and odd hours of the day. He discovered a little back room in the real-estate office half filled with old boxes and bags, of which no one else seemed to be aware, and this he fitted up with a bed and little table and lamp, and made of it, with a boy's enthusiasm—especially the enthusiasm of a boy who had known Indians—a secret cave in which he lived in a mysterious and exciting way. He slipped out to little restaurants and cheap boarding-places for his meals.

He remembers once standing fascinated before a sign that read: "Table d'hôte, 75 cents"; but after thinking twice of indulging in a single great eating orgy, he decided that no human stomach, much less his own small one, could possibly hold all the food that seventy-five cents would pay for, and that therefore he could not get all of his money's worth. So he went on to some fairer bargain.

This experience reminds one of the adventures of that arch-romanticist, Robert Louis Stevenson, when he had cut loose at a much riper age from his father's support, and lived in the little room on Bush Street in San Francisco, whence he sallied forth once a day to Papa Carrère's near-by "Poodle Dog," or some other gilded palace of food, for a full four-bit orgy of eating.

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There was a bank-vault just across the alley from his secret back room in the real-estate office, and many a night did young Herbert lie awake in his cave hearing his imaginary bank-robbers mining their way into the vault and escaping with much rich treasure. Stevenson also had his many dreams—and wrote them out—of treasure complicatedly stolen or found, and bloodily fought for.

But mostly young Herbert studied in that secret cave of his, and that he studied hard and to good purpose is proved by the fact that in little more than two years he felt himself ready to attempt the entrance examinations for college He picked up and dropped a succession of odd teachers, some of them "professionals," some of them men in the real-estate office, or other men who found themselves interested in this pink-cheeked young Quaker boy making such a brave fight for an education.

For some time the newspapers had been full of accounts of the founding and approaching opening of Stanford University at Palo Alto, California. Soon after Leland Stanford, Jr., the only child of Senator and Mrs. Leland Stanford, died in Rome in 1884—the Stanfords announced their intention to found and endow with their great wealth a new university in California. The romantic character of the founding and the picturesque setting of the new university in the middle of a great ranch on the shores of lower San Francisco Bay, with the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains rising from its very campus, its generous provision for students unable to meet the expenses of the older institutions of the East, and the radical academic innovations and freedom of selection of studies decided on by the Stanfords and David Starr Jordan, the eminent scientific man selected to be the first president of the new university—all this, together with the evident strong leaning of the institution toward science, as revealed by the character of the president, faculty and curriculum, combined to assure young Hoover that this was the modern scientific university of his dream, just made to order for him. It was exactly the place where he could become a mining engineer like the wonderful man he had always remembered.

College at Last

SO WHEN it was announced in the Portland papers that a professor from Stanford would visit the city in the early summer of 1891, to hold entrance examinations for the university, which was to open in the autumn, Herbert decided to try the examinations. But when he came to compare thoughtfully his store of knowledge with the published requirements he would have to meet, he found that his self-preparation had been rather one-sided. For in this preparation he had followed his inclinations more than the prescribed schedules of college entrance requirements. Why should one waste a lot of time, he had thought, and be bored during the wasting, by studying grammar if one could already talk intelligibly to people? And why should one not revel in complicated problems of figures and geometrical designs that really took some hard thinking to work out, if hard thinking was just what one liked to do?

So much to his distress he found out, as the examinations went on, that he was decidedly unprepared in some of the

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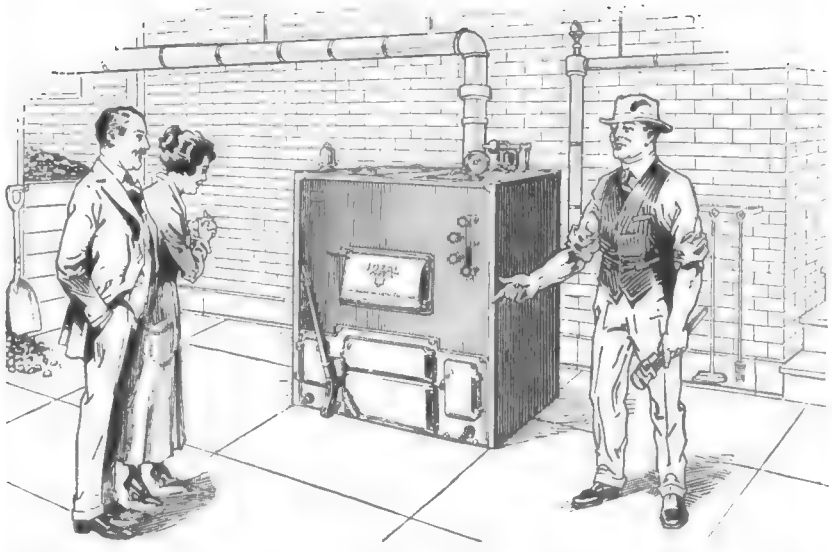

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He Is Never Well—

YET neither is he wholly sick. He is nervous and depressed, catches cold easily. Has frequent headaches, spells of indigestion, a twinge of rheumatism now and then.

"Pyorrhea," says his dentist. "He is but one of thousands of men and women who go to pieces in middle age because of this insidious disease."

Pyorrhea begins with tender and bleeding gums. Then, the gums recede and expose the unenameled tooth-base to decay. Eventually the teeth loosen and fall out, or must be extracted to rid the system of the infecting Pyorrhea germs that breed in little pockets about the teeth. These germs, which are carried in the blood stream to other parts of the body, are now known frequently to be the cause of rheumatism, anaemia, nervous disorders and other serious ills.

Don't let Pyorrhea get established in your mouth. See your dentist often for tooth and gum inspection, and start today to use Forhan's For the Gums.

Forhan's For the Gums will prevent Pyorrhea, or check its progress, if used in time and used consistently. Ordinary dentifrices cannot do this. Forhan's keeps the gums firm and healthy, the teeth white and clean.

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Use it twice daily, year in and year out. Wet your brush in cold water, place a half-inch of the refreshing, healing paste on it, then brush your teeth *up and down*. Use a rolling motion to clean the crevices. Brush the grinding and back surfaces of the teeth. Massage your gums with your Forhan-coated brush—gently at first until the gums harden, then more vigorously. If the gums are very tender, massage with the finger, instead of the brush. If gum-shrinkage has already set in, use Forhan's according to directions and consult a dentist immediately for special treatment.

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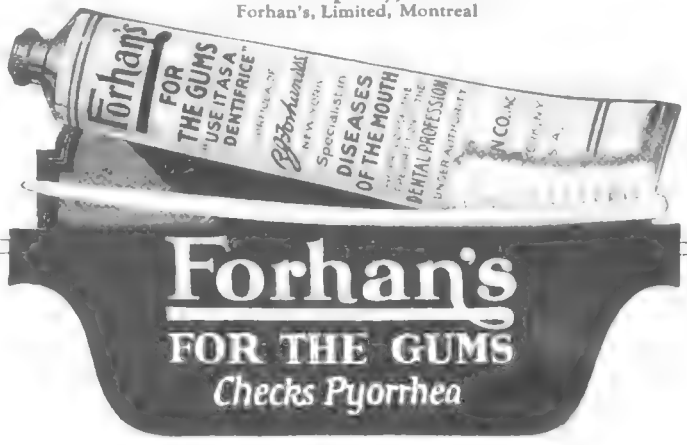

required lines such as grammar, rhetoric, etc. And even in mathematics, his favorite study and the one in which he made his best showing, he had not been able to cover, in his limited time for study, the whole ground required for college entrance. He seemed doomed to be refused the coveted certificate of admission.

But the Fates worked for him. In the first place Professor Swain, the examining professor—now president of Swarthmore College—was the head of Stanford's department of mathematics. In the second place he was a Quaker, and a man who liked the right sort of boys. So that a candidate who was a little weak in the languages, but was strong in arithmetic and geometry—and was a brave Quaker boy, besides—was not to be too summarily turned down.

This kind and wise examiner has described to me, recently, how he was first attracted to the young Quaker in the group of candidates before him by his evident strength of will. "I observed," said President Swain, "that he put his teeth together with great decision, and his whole face and posture showed his determination to pass the examination at any cost. He was evidently summoning every pound of energy he possessed to answer correctly the questions before him. I was naturally interested in him. On inquiry I learned that he had studied only two books of Plane Geometry, and was trying to solve an original problem based on the fourth book. While he was unable to do this, he did much better, for the intelligence and superior will he revealed in the attempt convinced me that such a boy only needed to be given a chance. So although he could not pass all of the tests, I told him to come to my rooms at the hotel after the examinations, as I would like to talk with him. He came promptly at the appointed hour with a friend of his, the son of a banker in Salem, Oregon. The two boys invited me and Mrs. Swain to stop at Salem to visit them, which we did. I learned there that Herbert Hoover, for that was the boy's name, was an industrious, thoughtful, ambitious boy earning his own living while he studied."

All this was enough for the wise teacher. And an arrangement was mutually agreed on between examiner and examined to the effect that if young Hoover would work diligently for the rest of the summer on the literary necessities of the situation, and come on early to Stanford for a little special coaching, he might consider his probabilities for admission to the university so high as to be reckoned a sure thing.

Well, it all turned out as desired by both candidate and examiner. And Herbert Hoover was enrolled the following October among the first students, the "pioneer class," of Stanford University, and was actually the first Stanford student to inhabit the beautiful great new dormitory called Encina Hall. But had his exceptional personal qualities been overlooked, and had he been judged alone by the grades on his examination papers, Stanford's most distinguished son would not have been a member of its pioneer class and perhaps would never have entered the university at all.

The next instalment of ***"The Story of Hoover,"*** *in the March number, will tell about his mining days.*

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Find out from the story by

O. HENRY

PAOLINA

(*Continued from page 65*)

foundering when Jerry returned to her from the men's locker-rooms while Paolina remained with Cora, changing back into her own clothes.

Mrs. Lownes had Jerry walk with her to a bench far away under some trees. "Now, Jeremy," she demanded, "who is that girl? An extraordinary position you've placed me in; every one says you're engaged to her; or you must be. And I don't know a thing about her."

"What do you think about her?" Jerry countered.

"Think—why—why, I think—Jerry, who is that girl?"

"Who do you think she is?" Jerry returned coolly, for he saw that his mother simply did not know but that Paolina *was* a little Italian lady possessing that palazzo, and the villa on Capri, and the brother now major of the Bersglieri and upon the king's staff.

"Jerry, where did you meet her? How long have you known her?"

Jerry answered the last. "Oh, three months."

His mother reckoned back to May and went on guard again.

"Jeremy, she's not—she can't be that Italian girl on the West Side whom your father——"

"Mother!" Jerry rebuked. "Mother!" was all he said, but his tone threw her all off guard again.

"Of course I didn't think it, dear," she set hastily to retrieving herself. "She doesn't suggest it at all. She is charming, dear. But you have distracted me so sometimes, Jerry. She comes from a fine old Roman family, they say. Jerry, which one? Tell me all about her."

So Jerry told all; how he met her, how he came to care for her, what he had found out, what he and Cora were doing with her that day; all—until his mother swayed and had to grasp at the side of their seat.

"But, Jerry, you were not bringing *her* to meet *me* with an idea of asking her to marry you?"

"Just it, Mother."

"But you—you couldn't."

"Why not?"

"But you don't—don't love her?"

"Love her? I love her and Faustina and Maria and Crispino and Bernardo and Letizia and Giuseppina——"

"Jerry, what do you mean? Who are those people?"

"Her sister-in-law and her nieces and nephews. Faustina has five and another coming!"

"Jerry, dear!"

"She has; and I think it's fine. They're not afraid of life! I love—almost—Arcangelo!"

"Don't," his mother pleaded. "No—no more, please."

But her pride forced her to play Cora's game for the rest of the evening; and the evening was long, for when Cora begged Paolina to remain, Paolina confided that, when she had departed, she had left word for Arcangelo that she might not be back till ten. "So if you will taik me home at ten," she said.

Thus they stayed, and promptly at ten Jerry and Cora and Cora's husband saw Paolina home. Neither Arcangelo nor

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any other of the family was about when Paolina opened the door. Jerry did not think as much of this circumstance then as he did several minutes later, when he suddenly halted his car.

"If you wouldn't mind going home with Cora in a taxi," he said to his friend in the back seat. He made no other explanation when they got out, and instantly he turned his car back to A. Besippo's corner.

Arcangelo now was home, Jerry learned when he was again at the door leading to the flat above the store. When he opened the door and stood in the stairway, he could hear Arcangelo's voice distinctly; and never had he heard any man—even Arcangelo—so dam' mad. No one replied to Arcangelo, though there were pauses for reply; but Jerry heard once a half-stifled cry, and he waited no longer, but leaped up the stairs and, finding the door whence came Arcangelo's voice, he broke the door with his hurling weight and was in the room. Arcangelo turned about and, seeing Jerry, reached behind him; then Jerry struck him hard, a swinging blow on the jaw, and Arcangelo went down.

"*Madonna! Madonna!*" Paolina cried, and bent over her brother.

She had taken off her new white dress and her hat; she had taken off, too, the shoes she had bought that morning for Jerry's sake and to meet his mother. She was kneeling with bare throat and shoulders and arms in chemise and girdle and skirt and in her new silk stockings. Finger-marks showed where Arcangelo had seized her small rounded arm when he had shaken her; and Arcangelo had struck her.

The man was crumpled on the floor by Jerry's blow, half stupefied and powerless.

YET Jerry's anger scarcely was less when he stooped beside little Paolina.

"It is my fault, all my own; my own, Jerry!" she cried. "Arcangelo, I dare not tell him where I go. I tell him this morning only that I go—down-town," she sobbed.

"Down-town; it is all I dare say. For you—he say you trick me; with you I must never go. He find out you so rich and so he think——"

"I know what he thought, Paolina," Jerry said, touching her bare shoulder gently. "Dear, dear Paolina. I heard him. I could not understand what he was saying; but I knew."

"But it was alrite, Jerry. He—that was Arcangelo. I knew it must be so; Arcangelo he feel so—responsible for me."

"Arcangelo's all right; or he will be in a minute, Paolina," Jerry said huskily, lifting her. So she had known all that day she was going back to this, that nothing could make her brother understand; indeed, Jerry knew now that she had accepted this when first he had asked her to go.

"Paolina, I love you," he said, holding her in his arms against him, amazed at the lightness of her and the tumult that little burden tumbled against his heart.

"I love you, Jerry, oh, so."

"Since the first day I saw you, Paolina!" He held her higher so that when he bent his head a little he could kiss her.

"Since that day; yes, the first," said Paolina; and he put her down. Arcangelo was coming to himself.

"Put those things on, then come with

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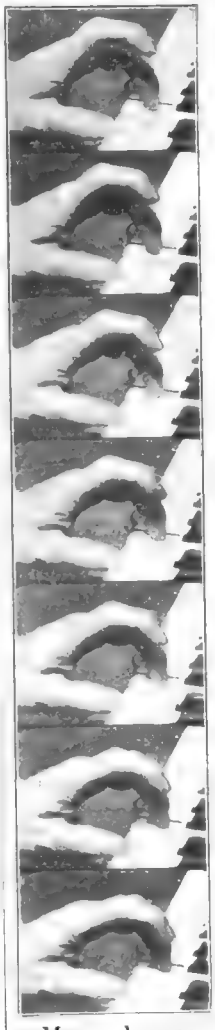

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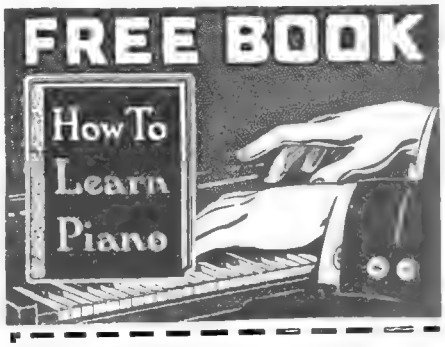

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me," Jerry bid Paolina, and with his back to her she dressed, while he watched her brother. No one else had attempted to interfere; if any one else had heard the breaking of the door, he must have laid it to the anger of Arcangelo.

Five minutes later Jerry was driving down-town with Paolina. At the best hotel she got a room; and at the second best, a block away, he got a room for himself. But he did not use it much; for tomorrow was Sunday and somehow, before midnight, he had a marriage license to obtain; and he got it. So at nine the next morning he made two telephone calls: one a toll to his mother and father and the other to Arcangelo and Faustina, and in each call he said:

"Paolina and I are to be married this morning at eleven," and he gave the name of the priest and the place where he had made the arrangements. "We both will be glad to have you present, if you care to come."

Then immediately he rang off.

Poppies

By J. Eugene Chrisman

POPPIES?
Not for me, buddy!
Buds o' Hell I'd call 'em,
Plain red hell—they—
They remind me——

And folks plant 'em around
Gardens—huh!
Says one old dame to me,
"Don't they bring back" says she,
"The poppied fields of Flanders?"
'Poppied fields of—' ain't that a heluva—
But who wants 'em brung back—huh?
Say, buddy,
If she'd seen poppies
Like I've seen 'em—millions—acres—
Scattered through the wheat-fields,
Red—and gettin' redder—mostly poppies—
Yeah—mostly!

Slim—my buddy—old scout
Slept under the same handkerchief,
Me 'n' Slim—clean through from the word go!
I'm liable to forgit—ain't I—
Day we kicked off west o' Château-Thierry
Down the valley—
Poppies—say,
You couldn't rest for poppies.
Then the Jerries cut loose
Machine-gun fire—reg'lar sickle.
Poppy leaves—bits o' red
Flickin' and flutterin' in the wind,
Mowed 'em, buddy—and us—I'll tell the world!
Got old Slim—got him right!
Down in the poppies he goes—kickin'—clawin'!
Don't talk poppies to me—
Skunk cabbage first—*compree?*
If you'd seen old Slim—
Boy, he died *wallerin'* in poppies!
Poppies——

Hell!

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DICTATED—BUT NOT RED

(*Continued from page 17*)

He repeated this slowly, then fished a lozenge from a vest pocket, set it daintily between his thin lips and sucked at it. As it was vanishing, a thin, sickly wafer, he emerged from the park from up on its western rim and dodged, head adroop and hat pulled down over his eyes, into an ill-lighted side street, up which the midnight air piped, chill and lugubrious, off the Hudson River. Spring had gone to sleep, and winter, lurking in the near background of the calendar, had crept abroad to fling a last, surly blast of ice before he died. Ira trotted past darkened houses, shivering in his vernal finery and blowing through his bony fingers. He stamped his feet as he ran and, as if to heat his body with thoughts, intoned to himself: "By Heaven! I'll give them all the Dirt Cure! I'll rub their noses in the ground some day!"

A patrolman, idling against a drug-store window, inspected the wayfarer calmly. Ira dropped instantly into a walk and fell to whistling. He persisted in his shrill tune till he arrived before a bold-faced apartment-house set down in the midst of a prim row of brownstone fronts. Here the orator entered, strode silently the length of the main-floor corridor, reached a gaudy iron stairway, and stretched his lean limbs up its slate treads.

Reaching the fifth floor, he tiptoed up to a door beside which flickered the thinnest possible trickle of gas from a jet adjusted so tightly that no forgetful tenant could fail to turn it down, inasmuch as he never could turn it up. "A. W. Flaherty" was the name on the card beside this door. Cummins opened it with the velvety touch of a hardened night prowler, and walked into pitch blackness, through which he groped.

A familiar door fell within his touch. Another key opened it. The next minute the prospective leader of the Second American Revolution was turning up the gas in a tiny room and gathering up a number of letters thrust under his door.

On a shaky little table beside a cot lay a sheet of paper on which Cummins read these words: "See me positively before you leave in the morning. This is last warning."

A BLACK frown overshadowed the orator's face. He glided to the door through which he had entered and shot the bolt noiselessly. Then he sank upon the cot, clasped his hands, and stared straight at the wavy mirror of the dresser opposite. A deep instinct sent his hand groping toward a box on the top of the dresser from which, without so much as glancing at it, he extricated an imposing throat-spray full of a benevolent brown liquid. Still staring into empty space, he automatically opened his mouth and sent a fine medicinal mist flying deep into the Cave of the Winds.

He returned the apparatus to its box. His hand then produced from a pocket another lozenge. He drew a deep breath, then looked, with sudden life, at a wall chart tacked up next to the wavy mirror. He noted sundry brightly drawn anatomical sketches thereon inscribed "Positions of the Larnyx in producing various sounds." He inhaled deeply, and then these words rolled out: "The Voice of the People shall thunder doom in the ears of their Oppressors."

He repeated this several times, skilfully altering the intonation each time. Then, from an inner pocket he drew his red memorandum book, jotted this great thought down with the utmost care, in microscopical letters, and, having finished, turned idly to the fly-leaf and read: "Famous Sayings of I. M. C."

SOMEHOW, all this had broken the spell of anger or fear which the sinister message upon the table had laid upon his soul. He pulled back his shoulders, removed his priceless Panama from his head, and tucked it away in a handsome leather box beneath the cot. Then he let his gaze wander thoughtfully to his library. The library hung from two heavy wall hooks just beyond the dresser. It covered the entire length of two boards, which were ingeniously held in position with a piece of clothesline. Reading from left to right, the library included the following literary treasures:

The One Hundred Greatest Orations.
The Life of Demosthenes.
Ten Cures for Stage-Fright.
First Principles of Elocution.
Stump Speaker's Guide.
Presence and Poise, in Fifteen Lessons.
Manual of Etiquette.
Stranger's Guide to New York.
One Hundred After-Dinner Speeches.
Two Thousand Quotations.
Note Book I. M. C.
Note Book I. M. C.
Note Book I. M. C.
How to Put On Flesh.

No library is quite complete, of course, without a touch of artistic decoration. To the right of the shelves hung a large lithograph displaying four masculine heads entitled "Proper Ways of Parting and Brushing Hair. Use Vincent's Anti-Dandruff Tonic. $1." Beyond this, six small plates portraying young gentlemen with stevedore shoulders and wasp waists encased in Spring Styles 1918. On the other side of the library, next to the dresser, a bent-wire photo-frame in which were tucked, at various angles, pictures of President Wilson, Abraham Lincoln, Victor Hugo, Demosthenes, Robert Ingersoll, Lenine, Trotzky, and, in the middle of this group, Ira M. Cummins.

All this display warmed the orator. He arose, stretched his arms briskly heavenward, clapped his hands together, and intoned in a stage whisper: "The Voice of the People shall thunder doom in the ears of their Oppressors." As he uttered the last word, he halted before the dresser and rapped his knuckles upon it, while he studied himself in the wavy mirror. He smiled fondly. Then he picked up a small pink plush box from the dresser, sat down again on the cot and opened the receptacle. On the inside of the lid he read the words: "Every Man His Own Manicure. For Best Results Use Implements only as per Directions Below." He picked up a dainty, shiny instrument and went to work.

This done, he returned the pink plush box to its fixed post between an impossible-looking device marked, "Mechanical Sock Darner, the Bachelor's Friend", and a pint jar of cold-cream. He stepped over to the window and drew the shade. Then he returned to the mirror, and this time he saw in it, unmistakable in his full glory, the peerless leader of the Second American Revolution. It could be no other! No other could be he!

Power! Poise! Dignity! Hair tossed back in jet splendor, ruffled just the least bit by the storm and stress of the evening's thrilling peroration. Eyes aflame with noble aspiration and majestic thoughts. Shoulders well back—not haughty, not imperial, but distinctly vigorous and supremely confident. A calm and lofty brow, rather classic on the whole. Not unlike George Washington, leader of the First American Revolution. Cummins, his gaze never wavering from its high objective, fished from a pocket one of the letters he had picked up as he came in. He held it up beside the mirror and then allowed his eyes to compare the portrait of Washington on the postage-stamp with the brow in the mirror. By George! The brow was astonishingly like that of the Father of His Country! The same sweeping expanse, rising to a thoroughly genteel Roman promontory just above the blinkers.

"PROBABLY," he mused, "all leaders of mighty revolutions have the same thoughts, the same brain type, hence the same brows." And he turned excitedly to the photo-rack and inspected Demosthenes, Lincoln, Lenine and Trotzky. Meanwhile, by force of habit, he was untying his glorious cravat and unbuttoning his collar. It may have been that these operations, together with the lateness of the hour, obstructed his mental activities; or it may have been that the pictures on the rack were poor ones. Anyhow, Ira yawned and said he didn't notice what you'd call a striking identity of brows, but he'd have a look at some fine photographs down at the public library and doubtless would spot the likeness at once.

As he placed his collar upon the dresser a dark change came over his spirits. He contemplated the linen band with melancholy eye. Accursed cloth! Everlasting, ever-present reminder of his cruel cross which he had been bearing so many years in bitter silence and must bear so many, many more years! It was extraordinarily small, that collar. In fact, it bore no conventional size number. It had been made to order. No haberdasher carried collars small enough for him, except in children's sizes; and once a low youth had laughed as he overheard Ira asking for a child's size. That once was enough. The humiliation lingered even yet. Never again had he tried to buy a ready-made collar! Besides, the sort he liked, those with long points, always insisted on thrusting themselves underneath his collarbone, as if a collarbone were meant for collars to nestle beneath. They hurt like the dickens after a few days; so he simply had to have some made that curved deftly away from the deep depressions in his anatomy at those points.

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Painful broodings! The orator bruskly removed his coat and vest and, without looking, he ran his rueful fingers up and down his arms and over his shoulders. As he did so, he winced, as he had winced every night for ever so many years. Bones! Bones! Nothing but bones! A mere outline of flesh and blood. Only a sketch, a free-hand sketch of Life! He was almost pure Spirit. The body was an almost negligible part of him. A mere ninety-nine pounds, to speak the coarse language of scientific exactness. Of course, spirituality is what makes a great leader of men. Meat doesn't do it. The old monks knew that, when they starved and lived on bread and water and wore hair shirts. That took off meat, and the more it took off the more the spirit asserted itself.

"They had to fight for it," he mused. "And to me this spirituality comes as a boon from Nature. There is some mysterious purpose of Providence in it all! But it's fierce!"

He looked at the ceiling and said firmly: "I must stop brooding over this affliction. Brooding is a mild taint of madness." He paused, then added softly: "Genius is to madness near allied. If I stopped brooding altogether, I might lose some of my spirituality."

With that terrible reflection, he gave way to his somber speculations. He recalled his early sufferings. In the little up-state village of Pillsburg, where he had lived as a boy, his sister had always called him the Family Skeleton—used to introduce him that way to young ladies. It was ghastly! The fellows at high school had called him Bones—that is, when they didn't call him Bellows. It was much crueller than old Uncle Ezra, who always talked about his smart young nephew, the Yellowcutionist. Uncle Ezra was a nice old fool and didn't mean to insult him; and anyhow a gibe directed at one's art is never barbed nor dipped in poison as is a sly allusion to one's physical person. What insult could compare with that of being publicly addressed before young ladies as the Family Skeleton? The phrase suggested vague, indecent things which respectable folks prefer to hide in their private closets.

WHAT a horrible mental torture he had lived through! And yet, was it not the whip of Destiny? If he hadn't been so horribly lean the exemption board wouldn't have haw-hawed at him, as they did when he presented himself for military registration. They wouldn't have gathered around the official scales and gaped as the medical examiner read off the fatal ninety-nine pounds. They wouldn't have said, "My boy, your country needs you—at Coney Island!" They wouldn't have given him an exemption certificate rating him as physically unfit. And then what? He would have gone marching off with the boys in khaki to France, perhaps to death. He would never have stood before the American people in Union Square. All the years of pent-up eloquence, all the fire of long-smoldering thoughts would never have blazed forth into glory. He would have perished in some wet trench, a youth to fortune and to fame unknown.

His fingers trembled as he ran them once more up and down his pipestem of an arm. "Yes, yes, poor little thing!" he murmured with deep feeling. "You are my cross, but you are also my salvation." He brooded profoundly over this thought. He dwelt upon its meaning in the history of religion. Then he brought forth again his red memorandum book and carefully set down the weighty words. That done, his mind relieved itself of this mighty circle of melancholy ideas. He turned to the newspapers that had made him famous.

In the top drawer of the dresser he quickly found a stack of press clippings about his great adventure. He fell to studying these as if they were rare documents about some mighty genius of antiquity. He handled them with scrupulous care as he read: "Young Bolshevik Turns Tables on Cop." "Fun in Magistrate Commons's Court." "Unknown Red Orator Outwits Police." Intense joy suffused his face; but soon a gray mood ensued. He clenched, groaned: "Sophie's right! It's worth a dollar a line, at the very least. They've given me a million dollars' worth of advertising. And I can't cash in on it. Oh, it's cruel!"

HE FLUNG the clippings from him in rage. He strode to the window and stared, far away, out into the night. New York was out there in that night. New York! Mightiest city of man! And all built on advertising! All around him were sleeping, in palaces of a splendor and luxury unknown to imperial Rome, thousands of men and women who had risen from penury to opulence through the magic of the published word.

Over there on Fifth Avenue slumbered an old woman who had amassed a million dollars simply by advertising pickles which she made according to an old family recipe. A block further down reposed a young man who had left Yale without a cent and, in three years, had piled up a solid fortune by advertising in a clever way a chewing-gum that was pretty much like a dozen other chewing-gums. In a side street just above Sherman Square, slept a wheezy, fat old multi-millionaire who had worked his way up from the furnace-room of a flour mill by borrowing money from all his friends and spending it all in advertising a pancake flour that the boys had mixed one day at the mill. Then there was that chap somebody had been talking about down at the office; a smart East Side tailor, who broke into the most exclusive Fifth Avenue trade simply by sending half a dozen runners to the Horse Show dressed up in his creations, and getting the society reporters to make special mention of them in the newspapers. Old Bowes it was who remarked that this genius had cleared not a cent less than fifty thousand dollars during the past year, all because of that advertising stunt!

"But all these men were able to raise cash to pay for their advertising and for following it up," he groaned. "And I can't do it. Morgolsky's money is gone. Burin hasn't any. Sophie is poor. And I—" He broke into a bitter laugh. "Thousands of dollars! It'll take thousands to get my School of Oratory under way. And not even Trevison will come across. Nobody cares whether I go down to ruin and oblivion or not. People with money are beasts. They trample on the poor. Woe unto them if ever the Second American Revolution gets under way! We shall pass a law compelling every rich man to give all his fortune to some noble cause and to work ten hours a day."

He brandished a menacing arm at New York. He marched up and down the tiny space before his cot, shaking his head. Once as he passed the cot he spied lying upon it one of the letters which he had found thrust under his door as he had entered. Idly he opened it. He read:

DEAR SIR: Holcombe & Rimes, Merchant Tailors, have placed in our hands for collection their long-overdue bill against you, amounting to $115.45. After carefully studying the record of this account and your repeated promises to pay something on account, we are forced to the conclusion that you have no serious intention of settling unless you are compelled to. We therefore notify you that unless we receive a substantial remittance before noon of the 12th inst., we——

The infuriated orator tore the missive to shreds, muttering: "Accursed plutocrats! They'd drive a man to prison if they could!"

He slumped down upon the creaky sagging cot and covered his face with his hands, as he moaned: "I am a wage slave! All my life the plutocrats have hounded me! They want to destroy me!"

Yes, they had started hounding him back in the drowsy old home town of Pillsburg. It seemed apparent the very week he left high school.

He had decided to take some burden off the shoulders of the passing generation. He tendered his services to the First National Bank. The president was quite polite and took down his name and address "in case anything turned up." While Ira was giving these to him, the paying-teller whispered to some low clerk: "That's the Yellowcutionist. We ought to put him in charge of New York exchange. He's an expert on drafts."

IRA visited every store in town and was met now with grins, now with low wit. Then a bright idea struck him: Why not start a School of Elocution and Oratory? He cast about for a plutocrat who might be interested in such an important educational enterprise. The only one he could summon courage to approach was his own Uncle Ezra. Ezra owned the old Cummins homestead three miles out of the town and, so rumor said, had saved up some money. Out to the farm at Knob Hill Ira trudged.

"Boy," said the hard old fellow, "at my time of life I don't want to burden my conscience with any scheme for increasing the output of human conversation. But I tell you what—there ain't farm-hands enough to go around. So if you'll hoe corn and peddle berries for me this summer I'll pay you wages enough so's you can start your school by October—and lose 'em all by Christmas at latest!"

Ira gave one look at his own wrists, then at the forty-acre lot of corn. He slunk out, crushed. He was ready to jump off the bridge into Pillsburg River. He might have followed his eminent predecessor Demosthenes, who sucked poison out of a pen when his enemies hounded him too roughly. But he didn't.

Out of Ezra's kitchen came running funny little Martha Mattison, the girl who had gone through high school with

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him; the girl who had admired him too strenuously. Martha Mattison, the girl whose father ran a small dairy on the edge of town and who had been working out of school hours milking cows and churning butter. The fellows had called her Cow. And she did have the wide, placid brown eyes of a Jersey and the unshakable calm of a Holstein. The only thing that had ever excited her was Ira's oratory. Her rapt gaze had even rattled him in his finest flights. Her applause had been too vehement, too prompt. The fellows used to say Ira had bribed her to clap. She did lack tact, confound her!

As she came up, her strong white arms bare and dripping with suds, Ira stared straight through her. He did not want to hear her rave about his perfectly wonderful, wonderful oratory, the way she usually did.

"I couldn't help hearing what Uncle Ezra just said to you," she stammered prettily. "I was in the kitchen washing dishes and——"

"What are you doing out here?" Ira cut in roughly.

"Working for Ezra this summer," she beamed. "He's going to teach me farming. I'm going to have a farm of my own some day. See here, Ira, are you sure you can start your school with three hundred dollars?"

"Positive!" he snapped and moved along.

"Then—you won't be mad, will you?—I'll give you the money. That is, I'll lend it to you—but I think you ought to start the school down in New York. There's ever so many more folks there, you know. And besides, people in Pillsburg would only josh you the way they always do."

Ira's head whirled. He stammered: "You? Where did you ever get three hundred dollars?"

"Milking Dad's cows five summers, of course! I won't need the money till I buy my farm, and that'll be some years yet, Ezra says. I would only leave it in the savings-bank. And I'd much rather you used it. I'd like awfully to see you win out down in New York, Ira. You're queer, but you're awfully smart. And a smart chap can succeed, even if he is queer, can't he?"

He frowned. Confound the Cow! What a tactless girl she was! And yet—he forced a laugh. "Why, yes! I suppose a man can. I know you're interested in oratory."

"OH, IT isn't that," she interrupted. "But—I hate to see every ninny in town play jokes on you and calling you a Bellows. Nobody gives you a chance. It makes me mad. I'd just like to see you climb up to the top and look down the whole crowd of them. I'd climb up myself and do it for the way they treat me. But I'm not clever like you. Now please take the money."

Four days later he was on the New York train, the Cow's three hundred dollars in his pocket. He had agreed to take the loan without interest, and he had promised to pay it back within a year. The Cow had seen him off at the station, calm pride in her good-bys.

That was just five years ago. And what black seas he had sailed since then! New York wasn't interested in oratory. The School of Elocution struggled along in a barren room for five months and expired painlessly with the last of the Cow's loan.

Oh, the agony of the letter he had to write to his financial backer! He detailed the insuperable obstacles the school had met with, but he knew the simple country girl would never understand them. His heart sickened as he dropped the missive in the mail-box. He'd have to get a good job at once and send her five dollars a week——

"It is too bad. But never mind," came her answer. "I won't need the money for a long time. Pay a little whenever you can and please don't worry. Worry will make you thin."

THAT was five years ago. And ever since then, Christmas always brought him two chaste four-in-hands with a pretty card, "Best wishes from M. M." And every Valentine's Day left a funny anonymous lace-paper affair at his door.

The orator sought to revive his languishing fortunes by offering his services to Chautauquas, churches and women's clubs. But apparently there was an Orators' Trust, a plutocracy of elocution. The lecture managers wouldn't give a poor outsider a look-in. Probably they had a regular combine with the Big Fellows; got rake-offs from them, and all that. Usual New York game!

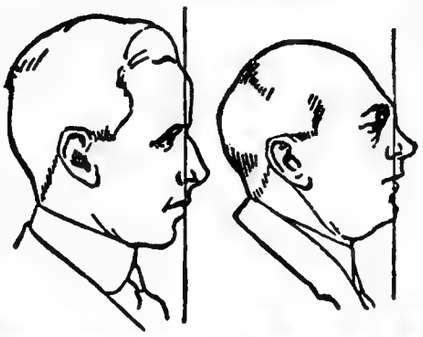
The stranger from afar finally gave up and turned to new fields. There he found, first of all, a patent safety-razor to sell on street corners at noon hour. It looked good, eighty-five sold in the first week, and the cops always gave him a fair chance to spy them first and make a getaway. The crowds enjoyed his oratory, too. On the first Saturday he went around to his employer's lodgings to draw his commissions, and lo! that gentleman had vanished with all the proceeds.

Ira wandered in a daze. Late in the evening he found himself on a park bench, listening to a greasy foreigner shrieking half-English from a soap-box. The fellow was cursing the plutocrats who crush the humble toilers of the world by fraud and might, and his words were molten lava. But very poor technique! He mumbled. He slurred. He swallowed final syllables. His gestures didn't fit his thoughts. Ira was inflamed by the thoughts and irritated by the delivery. He strode over to the soap-box, and, as the fellow finished, the young victim of safety-razor plutocracy ascended.

The crowd went wild. Ira forgot his misfortune in the roar of his admirers. His heart thrilled at the sight of the wild, wild eyes and hurrah. He told his sad story, with pathos and low lights. And after the speech men crowded up and insisted that he come often and address them.

Ever since he had gone there when he felt at odds with the world. Of course that had brought down on him the secret wrath of the plutocrats. They wouldn't give him a job. They feared his power. Cunning demons, the whole pack of them! They had foreseen the day of wrath, when a downtrodden people would bestir itself and rise up to stamp out the brood of golden vipers it had been cherishing in its bosom.

"The brood of golden vipers!" Ira



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You and a million other men who are so vitally interested in selling or employing men should send for Mr. Taylor's book and read it. He has agreed to send it

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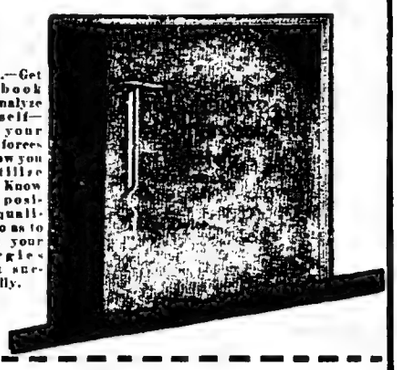

WILSON M. TAYLOR,
Sales Efficiency Expert,
35 West 39th Street, New York City.

Please send me copy of your book, "The Science of Approach," on 5 days' approval—enclosed find $2.00. If I decide not to keep the book, I will return same to you within 5 days and you are to return the $2.00 without question.

Name .....

Address .....

Everybody's 2-20

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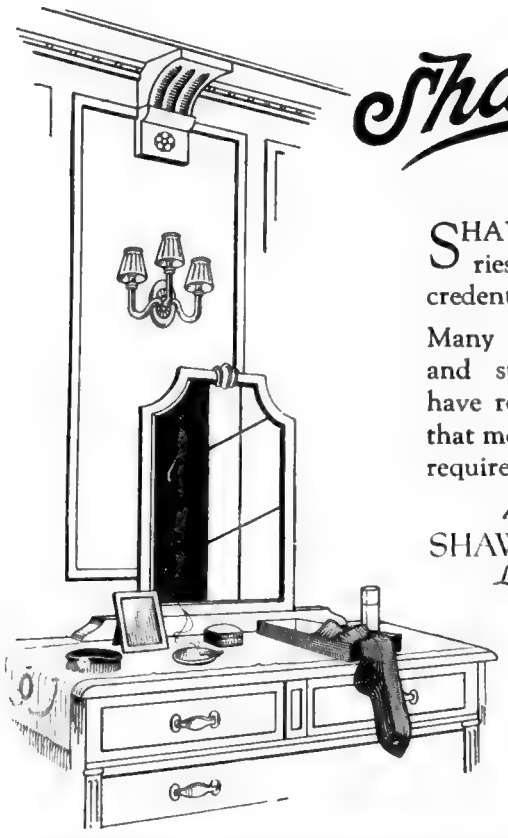

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repeated and straightaway jotted it down in his red book.

They and their crafty lawyers—fellows like Trevison's family attorneys—had foreseen, too, that when the second American Revolution arrived it must have a strong leader. Lacking such an one, the uprising would collapse, of course. What more natural move, then, for them to make than to spy out all the powerful young minds in the world and to crush them? They were playing Pharaoh to the first born of the New Era!

Ira jotted down the last line in the red book too. Then into bed, hoping that the darkness would blot out the hideous truth that the plutocrats had won. Won at the cruelest moment, too! Five years he had struggled, and here he was on the very brink of fame and power! The world of the downtrodden was acclaiming his name, praying that he lead them to victory. All he needed was a few thousand dollars, cold cash, to establish himself firmly as the leader of the second American Revolution. And what did he have? Four hundred and twenty dollars contributed by loving friends, for the Cause. And, in the top drawer of his dresser, four hundred and eighty dollars of long overdue bills—not including the five-year-old loan from the long-forgotten Cow! Three collectors ready to hale him to court in the morning! His room rent unpaid, and he about to be thrown out, bag and baggage, by a mercenary landlady who objected to entertaining angels unfinanced.

VII

In which the Heavyweight Villain Plutocracy Closes in on our Hero for a Knockout, but Has to Go Back to His Corner while the Hero Reads a Letter.

THE May morning shone blithely in around the frayed edge of the window-shade, but its cheer did not penetrate Ira's heart as he crawled out of bed half an hour late. And on the very day when he must face his fate and decide his whole future! A delicate conference at Bowes & Cravath, in which he must explain his recent mysterious absence from the office. That agonizing luncheon with Sophie, at which he must either devise a marvelous lie or tell her bluntly that he was dead broke and could never, never finance the Second American Revolution. And then the business of settling with those vampires, the bill collectors, before they hauled him to court. Then the business of procuring a little money for rent.

As Ira drew himself erect in his pajamas, and drew ten deep, slow breaths, expelling as gradually as possible, according to direction in Chapter VIII. of "The Principles of Elocution," his sleepy eyes surveyed through a haze the litter of press clippings, the duns, and the handful of unopened letters he had found on his floor the night before. Each particular piece of paper added a touch of gray and gloom to the atmosphere of his mind. And, somehow, in the presence of these documents, the power of the spoken word seemed singularly slight.

As he had done every morning for five years, the orator fixed an eye on the wall chart entitled "Position of the Larynx in Producing Various Sounds" and uttered,

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ten times each, the well-known vowels of our mother tongue, variously intoned by throat, chest and diaphragm. But this prolonged incantation did not break the spell of those duns. They did not prick the bubble of the nightmare. They did not cause the evil things to fade away. In fact, they worked in the very opposite manner. They seemed to make the accursed papers more substantial and more virile than ever. In his own ears, the sounds rang like the bleating of a sheep that has come upon a great, gray wolf in a lonely forest.

HE SHUDDERED. "It is the end!' he moaned in a hollow tone produced by Position 12 on the larynx chart. "It is the end! They have crushed me! What shall I do?"

He echoed this agonizing query over and over, as he slipped into his lovely exclusive-pattern silk shirt. As he pulled on his genuine marsupial kangaroo shoes he reread that ominous penciled note on his bedside table: "See me positively before you leave in the morning. This is last warning."

He brandished both fists at the note. "There is one way of escape!" he hissed. "There is one way of victory still open! I shall declare war—war to the death! I shall become Prince of the Reign of Terror! I shall teach the plutocrats a lesson of blood and iron!"

He turned to contemplate his terrible mien in the mirror. He bared his teeth, and shot poisonous glances at the uneven glass, whose irregularities added most effectively to the blood-curdling spectacle.

"The worm has turned!" he thundered. "And, having turned, lo, it becomes Juggernaut!"

He reached for his red memorandum book and jotted that thought down. Then fell to lacing his shoes, while his powerful executive mind set itself to devising ways and means of becoming Prince of the Reign of Terror.

He must sell all his possessions at once and disappear. That much was clear. He knew a pawnbroker who would give a hundred dollars for his wardrobe. With the four hundred and twenty dollars that he had received from unknown admirers, more than enough to equip himself with a trusty revolver, a sand-bag, a gag, and a safe drill. He would don a cheap suit of hand-me-downs. He would prowl from dive to dive, diplomatically seeking powerful men to join his cause. He would be the Robin Hood of Manhattan. He and his Merry Men would lie in wait for the plutocrats as they rolled along in their cars through Central Park. Overpowering the chauffeur, his band would take plutocrat, car and all, off to a cavern—there were lots of caverns in the Palisades across the river—and there they would hold the victim for a million-dollar ransom. Every hour that the ransom was delayed they would brand a deep burn in the recalcitrant's anatomy. A regular branding-iron ought to be used—the sort the cowboys use out on the big ranches. The brand of the Golden Calf! Ah! That would be a grim jest! When the million dollars was delivered, Robin Hood would give half of it to the poor and the suffering. The other half he would invest in more sand-bags, more gags, more safe-drills, more Merry Men. One or two

What Is Nerve Force?

By PAUL VON BOECKMANN

For 25 years the leading authority in America on Psycho-physics

NERVE Force is an energy created by the nervous system. What it is, we do not know, just as we do not know what electricity is.

We know this of Nerve Force: It is the dominant power of our existence. It governs our whole life. It is Life; for if we knew what nerve force were, we would know the secret of life.

Nerve force is the basic force of the body and mind. The power of every muscle, every organ; in fact, every cell is governed and receives its initial impulse through the nerves. Our vitality, strength and endurance are directly governed by the degree of our nerve force.

If an elephant had the same degree of nerve force as a flea, or an ant, he would jump over mountains and push down sky-scrapers. If an ordinary man had the same degree of nerve force as a cat, he could break all athletic records without half trying. This is an example of Muscular Nerve Force.

Mental Nerve Force is indicated by force of character, personal magnetism, moral courage and mental power.

Organic Nerve Force means health and long life.

It is a well balanced combination of Physical, Mental and Organic Nerve Force that has made Thomas Edison, General Pershing and Charles Schwab and other great men what they are. 95% of mankind are led by the other 5%. It is Nerve Force that does the leading.

In our nerves, therefore, lies our greatest strength; and there, also, our greatest weakness—for when our nerve force becomes depleted, through worry, disease, overwork, abuse, every muscle loses its strength and endurance; every organ becomes partly paralyzed, and the mind becomes befogged.

The noted British authority on the nerves, Alfred T. Schofield, says, "It is my belief that the greatest factor in the maintenance of health is that the nerves should be in order."

Unfortunately few people know that they waste their nerve force, or will admit that it has been more or less exhausted. So long as their hands and knees do not tremble, they cling to the belief that their nerves are strong and sound, which is a dangerous assumption.

How often do we hear of people running from doctor to doctor, seeking relief from a mysterious "something-the-matter" with them, though repeated examinations fail to indicate that any particular organ is weak or diseased.

It is "nerves" or "you are run down," the doctor tells the victim. Then a "tonic" is prescribed, which temporarily gives the nerves a swift kick, and speeds them up, just as a fagged-out horse may be made to speed up by towing him behind an automobile.

The symptoms of nerve exhaustion vary according to individual characteristics, but the development is usually as follows:

First Stage: Lack of energy and endurance; that "tired feeling," especially in the back and knees.

Second Stage: Nervousness; sleeplessness; irritability; decline in sex force; loss of hair; nervous indigestion; sour stomach; gas in bowels; constipation; irregular heart; poor memory; lack of mental endurance; dizziness; headaches; backache; neuritis; rheumatism, and other pains.

Third Stage: Serious mental disturbances; fear; undue worry; melancholia; dangerous organic disturbances; suicidal tendencies, and in extreme cases, insanity.

It is evident that nerve depletion leads to a long train of evils that torture the mind and body. It is no wonder neurasthenics (nerve bankrupts) become melancholy and do not care to live.

If only a few of the symptoms mentioned apply to you, especially those indicating mental instability, you may be sure your nerves are at fault—that you have exhausted your Nerve Force.

Nerve Force is the most precious gift of Nature. It means everything—your happiness, your health, your success in life. You should know all there is to learn about your nerves; how to relax, calm and soothe your nerves, so that after a severe nerve strain you can rebuild your lost Nerve Force, and keep yourself physically and mentally fit.

Paul von Boeckmann, the noted Nerve Culturist, who for 25 years has been the leading authority in America on Breathing, Nerve Culture and Psycho-physics, has written a remarkable book on the Nerves, which teaches how to soothe, calm and care for the nerves. The cost of the book is only 25 cents (coin or stamps). Bound in elegant cloth and gold cover, 50 cents. Address, Paul von Boeckmann, Studio 480 World's Tower Bldg., 110 West 40th St., New York City. You should order the book today. It will be a revelation to you and will teach you important facts that will give you greater Physical, Mental and Organic Nerve Force. If you do not agree that this book teaches you the most important lesson on Health and Mental Efficiency you have ever read, your money will be refunded by return mail, plus the outlay of postage you may have incurred.

The author of Nerve Force has advertised his various books on Health and Nerve Culture in the standard magazines of America during the last twenty years, which is ample evidence of his responsibility and integrity. The following are extracts from letters written by grateful people who have read the book:

"I have gained 12 pounds since reading your book, and I feel so energetic. I had about given up hope of ever finding the cause of my low weight."

"Your book did more for me for indigestion than two courses in dieting."

"My heart is now regular again and my nerves are fine. I thought I had heart trouble, but it was simply a case of abused nerves. I have re-read your book at least ten times."

"The advice given in your book on relaxation and calming my nerves has cleared my brain. Before I was half dizzy all the time."

A physician says: "Your book shows you have a scientific and profound knowledge of the nerves and nervous people. I am recommending your book to my patients."

A prominent lawyer in Ansonia, Conn., says: "Your book saved me from a nervous collapse such as I had three years ago. I now sleep soundly and am gaining weight. I can again do a real day's work."

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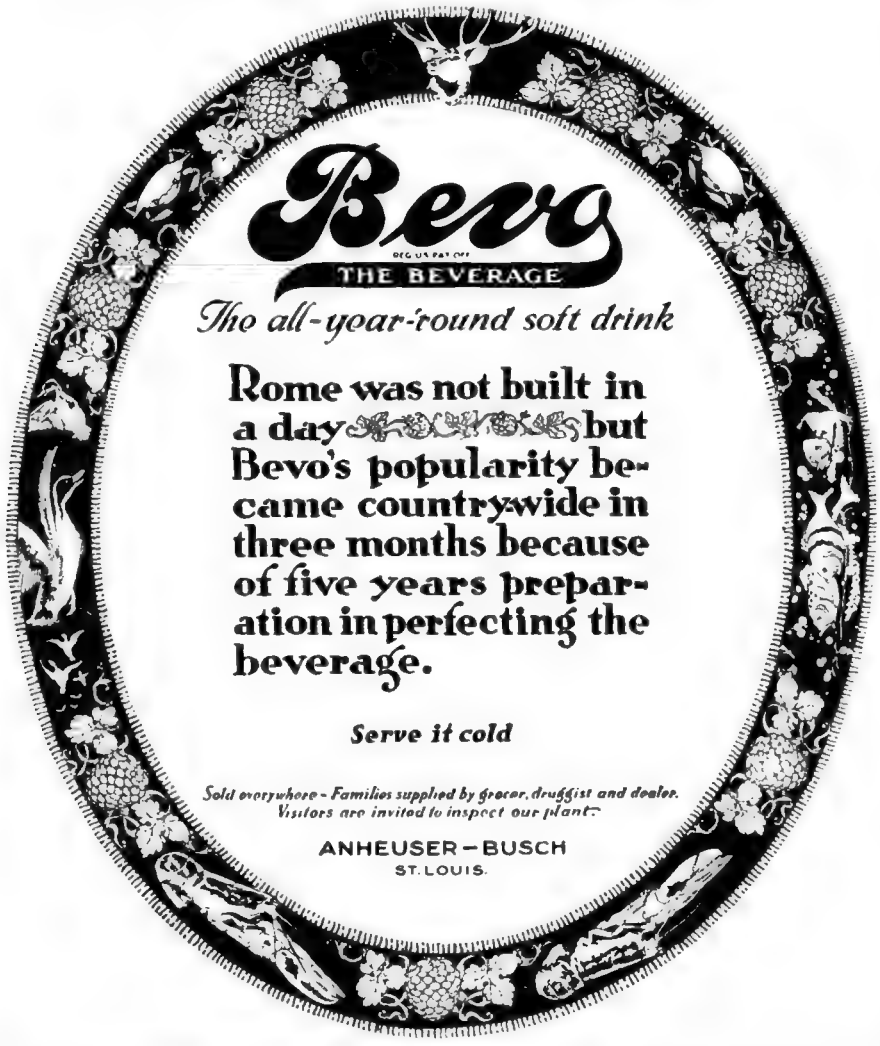
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American School of Banking, 73 McLean Bldg., Columbus, O.

ransoms like that and he could manufacture his own supplies and equipment, thus doing away with the accursed middleman's profits. He could have hundreds of Merry Men operating wherever plutocrats drove limousines. And then the old order of Capitalism would come tumbling down like a house of cards! He would——

Rap! Rap! On the door.

"Yes." The Prince of the Reign of Terror piped thinly.

"There's a gentleman outside to see you," responded a thickish female voice. "He's waiting on the front steps. And before you go down I want a word with you."

"Yes'm. Certainly," answered the Prince. "I—I'll be dressed in a few minutes."

His fingers shook as he fastened on his collar. He botched his exquisite cravat three times. His executive mind suspended the finishing touches of the Reign of Terror; it devoted its full power to the problem on the other side of the bedroom door. The man of mystery waiting for him on the front steps—who was he? The collector for Holcombe & Rimes, Merchant Tailors? And the word with the thickish female voice. Brr!

SHAKILY the orator pottered around the room, striving to delay to the latest possible moment his exit. He brushed his lovely suit three times. He changed his cravat. He picked up the press clippings and neatly stacked them away in a drawer. He tore up the entire heap of overdue bills and aged duns, and dropped them into his waste-basket. He sprayed his throat, which was peculiarly parched, considering the hour of day. And, as he set the atomizer back upon the dresser, he noticed the little stack of unopened mail of the night before.

Grimly he opened these fresh letters. The first was from an admirer out in Waukesha, who asked for copies of his famous Union Square philippics, six cents postage being enclosed. The second was a "Please Remit." The third was a plain bill for $4.55. The fourth was a brief letter from Bowes & Cravath, alluding to his peculiar and unannounced absence from the office for six consecutive days, and asking that, if he expected to be detained longer, he have the courtesy to notify the firm, so that they might arrange for a substitute.

"They'll have plenty of time to find a substitute!" Ira sneered, as he tore up the missive.

Three more "Please Remits.". And then the last letter. It was postmarked Pillsburg. Ira frowned at the unknown writing.

"It never rains but it pours," he showed his Robin Hood teeth. "This is probably from the Cow's lawyer. She's going to try collecting her three hundred dollars, too. Everybody's doing it!"

He opened the envelope in sardonic humor. How would a country boob's dun differ from the dun of a suave urban money-hound? Probably would resort to cheap bullying. Probably——

He ceased marveling, as his eye caught the top lines.

DEAR IRA:

You will be surprised I guess to hear from your old Uncle Ezra wont you? I am not

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much in the writing line but this time Ive got lots to say. Martha brought out a bunch of N. Y. papers last Sunday and we read all about you and the way you played a slick trick on those Tammany cops. It did my heart good boy. Said I to Martha, you were right about him, hes as smart as the next one and instead of his yellowcution standing in his way as a lot of darned fools around Pillsburg thought it would hes cashing in on it. Chip of the old block boy! Thats you! It did me proud to see my nephews name slam bang on the front pages on the big N. Y. papers right where they were putting Pres Wilsons only the day before. I got up and danced Martha round the room and knocked over a china pitcher and cracked it. But darn the expense I said, when the family celebrates getting famous.

Ira my boy your the very first Cummins that ever got fame. We have been in the background of U. S. history too darned much. Considering we've been here two hundred years. Im the only one before you who made a mark on U. S. history and it wasn't much more than a pin scratch. Youre too young to recall how I ran for Congress way back in 1888 on the combination Populist & Prohibition ticket aint you? Well I lost out by the smallest vote ever given any Congress candidate in the history of the U. S. I only got 18 votes though Id have gotten 45 at least if that mangy hound Sim Hopkins hadn't gone round saying Id palmed off a green colt on him for an acclimated one that up and died just because the fool left him out in the rain one night and got pneumonia of course. It worried me a long time Ira. I thought I was in wrong. But the trouble wasn't with me, it was with folks. Every darned thing in my platform of 1888 folks hooted at then my boy. The boys used to guy me on Main Street and I had to wallop some of them to make them shut up which they did. But here it is 1918 and by gravy every one of them same darned planks of my old platform have been nailed down fast into the framework of our country's laws so to speak. Demon Rum is on the run. The common people are coming into their own. And so on. But I must go on to the point of what I've got to say to you.

I like your nerve and ambition Ira. And the way you put it over the Tammany cops who persecute you. I guess youre a sort of fellow I was 30 years ago—sort of ahead of your time and not appreciated. I like the way you crack the whip at those plutocrats down in N. Y. Go to it boy. Put a bomb under wicked old Wall St. Your old Uncles is with you in your 1918 model of Populism and all that. But as I was going to say, I want to show I appreciate the man who puts the honorable name of Cummins on the map in the history of the U. S.

Im 63 yrs old this month Ira and aint as spry on my feet ever since a low mule I traded in last spring kicked me while I was in the kindest spirit applying spavin cure. Also Ive saved up a little money through my forty years of farming etc. Not much you understand but enough to sort of ease my declining days and keep me from worrying where Im going to get my next meal. So Ive decided to retire. And Im going to give this farm at Knob Hill to you Ira as a token of my esteem and gratitude for seeing you leap to fame and drag the honorable name of Cummins with you into the bright circle of distinguished families.

Its yours Ira whenever you come out here and take title. Which you may do whenever you like but the sooner the better as far as Im concerned because I don't feel like farming this summer. I want a rest and Ive a little business outside that I ought to attend to. Also theres a scarcity of farmhands this season.

I want just my upper east room Ira where my books and things are. And I want plain food and plenty of it till Im gathered to my fathers. Thats all I ask of you just as your grandfather did of me and its fair isn't it? Also youd better let me keep Martha on with

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us another year longer. The girls knows the ropes and will be mighty useful to you in case you come out here to work the place right away as you should. Shes saving up to buy a farm you know and shes been set back at it by having to help put her brother Henry through Agr. college as I was saying. Her father died to summers ago you know and his dairy went to pieces and its made hard sledding for Martha though as I told her she was foolish to spend so much on Henry because he could a come here with me and learned more than all the professors of farming could tell him in 1,000,000 years. But I couldn't budge her. Shes set in her ways Martha is.

Now as I was saying if you and I set this agreement down in black and white so there cant be any painful misunderstand about it when I get old and doddering and cant remember any more whats what, why Ill give you this farm, 162 acres and worth not a cent less than $22,000 if sold at auction on a rainy day without previous advertisements in the county papers. And as Eb Hallowell remarks worth $50,000, with Martha thrown in. Ha, ha, boy! Thats a joke but spoken in earnest. Ebs got his eye on Martha.

Also, if you'll keep things moving right this year I'll lend you $1500 cash for two years to make improvements the way Martha thinks they should be. Shes been studying uptodate farming with tractors and chemicals and all that and she thinks the place would double its earnings if we went in for such improvements. Also she thinks theres some things around the house that need fixing up in a pretty and comfortable way. I ain't so sure about all these notions but I know Im an old back number now. Im pretty good at horses and mules and common Leaming and Swedish oats and so on but when it comes to machinery I was born too late.

Well Ira I hope this pleases you half as much as you pleased me by getting to be a famous man down in N. Y. And Martha and I hope to see you soon out here at old Knob Hill.

Your admiring uncle.

O. S.—Are these Bowlsheviky I read about in the papers Prohibitionists? Or are they Populists?

*The next instalment of "**Dictated—But Not Red**" will appear in the March Number.*

The Returned Soldier

By Josephine Lytle Lovingood

WE LAUGHED and joked together in the sun.
He was so full of life and young and strong,
Drinking in nature's beauty with a song
Gilding his lips. I thought of him as one
Who had been wakened by war's searing blast,
Not broken on the hot, red wheel of pain.
He said, "It's nice to feel the sun again;
I hope these gorgeous summer days will last.
Jove! But it's good to be alive and sound
Now June is here, and all the birds and flowers!
Just hear that thrush—he's sung there now for hours!
And what a day for fishing! I'll be bound
That we'd have bites, for fish go off their heads
In this strong wind. Tell me, is that a rose
That smells so heaven-sweet? It's not like those
We have at home in Mother's garden beds——
Come on, let's stroll about and try to find
Some more."
And as we started down the stair,
His careless laughter ringing on the air,
I noticed suddenly that he was blind.

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MARY WOLLASTON

(*Continued from page 47*)

want any one around. So I made a bluff of going to bed myself. But he told me to stick; said we'd settle down and have a smoke presently. I don't know how long it was before we heard LaChaise and March coming, but it seemed a deuce of a while.

"Dad was right on the job then, calm as a May morning. He introduced March and me and said something polite about his music, never a word about his having been hiding all the evening.

"Then LaChaise spoke to Dad in French. Said there was some business he wanted to talk with him about and that he'd like an appointment. I wasn't sure that Dad quite got him, so I crashed in and interpreted.

"Dad reached out and took hold of me, as if he was sort of glad that I was there, and told me to tell M. LaChaise that we had plenty of time right now, and if there was anything to discuss the sooner we got at it the better.

"I handed that on in French—I tried not to lose any of the kick out of it—and while I was doing that March made a move to go.

"Dad told him not to. I wish you could have been there. I remember he said after inviting him as cool as you please to stay, 'I imagine you are as much concerned in this as any one.' It didn't feaze March though. He said that he didn't believe that what Mr. LaChaise had to say concerned him. Then he made a stiff little bow for good night and went off down the hall to get his hat. Oh, that wasn't like a doughboy, I'll admit. I went to the door with him and we made a little conversation there for a minute or two just to take off the edge. That's when I found out where he'd been.

"Father had taken LaChaise into the drawing-room when I got back but I don't believe either of them had said three words. They were waiting for me. Dad led off by asking what he thought of March, and LaChaise told him, though you could see that wasn't what was on his mind. He said March had a very strong and original talent and that he believed he had operas in him. There was one practically finished that he was going to look at to-morrow. Then he pulled up short and said it was Paula he wanted to talk about.

"Dad caught that all right without waiting for me to interpret it. What he wanted to get at, right at the jump-off was, whether Paula knew LaChaise had come down to talk about her. Was he to consider M. LaChaise her emissary? I took a chance on *émissaire* for that and it worked all right.

"Well, the Frenchman said, as cool as you please, that he was. Said he wouldn't have ventured to intrude otherwise, and Dad froze to ice right there. But LaChaise went on and spoke his piece just the same. He said he'd come to-night to verify the enthusiastic reports he had heard of her singing, but that she had outdone them all. He said the voice itself was unusual, of great power and of beautiful quality, adequate in range for anything that could be expected of her. But he said that was only the beginning of it. The important things were that she was a real musician in the first place and a woman with real passions in the second.

"I didn't know whether to interpret that to Dad or to shut the Frenchman up myself right there. I would have liked to take a punch at him. But of course you're nothing but a part of the machinery when you are interpreting, so I handed it on, without looking at Dad. All he said was, 'We'll get to the point, if you please, Monsieur.'

"LaChaise understood that without waiting for me. He said he had had no hesitation in offering Paula a contract to sing the leading dramatic soprano rôles at High Forest this summer, and that he had told her that if it worked anywhere near as well as he expected it to he thought there was no doubt of her getting a good Metropolitan engagement next season. He finished up by saying that he had had to ask her to make a decision as soon as possible because he was at that moment in treaty with some one else who couldn't be put off very long.

"Dad asked then whether Paula had given him an answer to-night. LaChaise told him she had accepted, but that it was subject to his obtaining Dad's consent. Then he finished with a little bow. 'That is the point you have asked me to come to, Monsieur,' he said.

"Dad never said a word for a minute. You could see it must have been perfectly ghastly for him. I guess LaChaise must have seen it himself, for he went on and tried to soften it down a bit. Said he didn't want to seem to *brusquer* the affair. All he wanted to ask Dad to-night was that he should agree to consider the matter, bearing in mind that a real artist like *Madame*, his wife, couldn't be kept shut up in a brass tower indefinitely.

"Dad cut him off rather short on that. He said that from a legal or business point of view, which was all that could possibly concern La Chaise, his consent wasn't necessary. If his wife signed a contract he would put no obstacles in the way of her fulfilling it. Beyond that he had obviously nothing to say.

"Well, that was about all. They both put on all the trimmings saying good night to each other and LaChaise thanked me very handsomely for interpreting. I chucked him into his overcoat and let him out the front door—and bolted it after him, you bet! Lord, but I hated to go back to Dad after that.

"I needn't have worried, though. When we sat down for our smoke in the library it was exactly as if nothing had happened. I'd have been tearing my hair, but old Dad—He certainly is a peach!"

He paused there for some comment from her and when she made none looked around at her. Her hands were lightly clasped across her breast, her eyelids nearly closed. Save for her barely perceptible breathing, she lay dead still.

"Have I talked you to sleep?" he asked.

"No," she said, "I was thinking what a mixed-up thing life is. The way you can't help liking and admiring the people you wish you could hate and can't help hating and hurting the ones you love." Then her eyes came open with a smile and she held out a hand toward him. "You don't have to answer that," she added. "That's the sort of silly thing people say when they have been drinking gin. What I was really wondering was whether there will be anything about Mr. March's opera in that contract Paula signs with LaChaise?"

This startled him. "I never thought of that," he answered. "Do you suppose that's it? Oh, it can't be! She wouldn't chuck Dad for that doughboy piano-tuner. Not Paula!"

"Oh, no," said Mary. "She wouldn't do that. It wouldn't look to her like that anyhow. She's got enough, don't you see, for everybody; for dad and—and the doughboy as well. Father wouldn't have any less, if he could just make up his mind that he didn't have to have it all. And as for the other, why it might be just the greatest thing that could possibly happen to him—being in love with Paula and writing operas for her and having her sing them the way she sang those songs to-night. I suppose that's what a genius needs. And you couldn't blame her exactly. At least there always have been people like that and the world hasn't blamed them, no matter how moral it pretends to be. It's the other sort of people, the ones who won't take anything unless they can have it all and who can't give anything unless they can give it all—those that haven't but one thing to give—that are—no good."

He didn't more than half understand her, which was fortunate, since he was rather horrified as it was. He put it down broadly as the same sort of nervous crisis that he had encountered in New York, a sort of hypersensitiveness due to the strain of war work—the thing he had amused her by speaking of as shell-shock.

"I think perhaps I know what has upset you to-night," he said timidly. "At least, Graham told me about it."

She looked up at him with a puzzled frown. It was the third time that he had brought up the Stannard boy's name. What in the world——?

"He's terribly distressed about it," Rush went on. In his embarrassment he wasn't looking at her and she composed her face. "He didn't mean to shock you—or offend you. He says he gave you reason enough to be offended, but only because you didn't understand. He says he has always—cared for you a lot. He said he thought you were the most—well, about the most perfect thing in the world. Only to-night he said he got carried off his feet and went a little further than he had any right to. And he simply can't bear to have you think that he meant anything—disrespectful. He felt he had to apologize to you before he went home, and he waited and waited and you didn't come down, so finally he told me about it and made me promise that I'd tell you to-night. Of course, I don't know what he did," Rush concluded, "but I can tell you this: Graham Stannard's a white man; they don't make them whiter than that."

Her reply, although it was unequivocally to the effect that it was all right, Graham needn't worry, failed, altogether, to reassure him. Was this, after all, he wondered, what she had "exploded" about?

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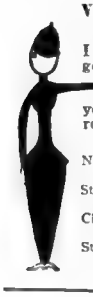

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She prevented further inquiry, however, by an abrupt change of the subject, demanding to be told what it was that he and his father, all these hours, had been talking about.

He took up the topic with unforced enthusiasm. He had been surprised and deeply touched over the discovery that his father did not require to be argued out of the project either to send him back to Harvard or to start him in at the bottom in Martin Whitney's bank. "If he'd just been through it all himself, he couldn't have understood any better how I feel about it."

"Did you tell him about the farm?" Mary asked.

This was an idea of Graham's which she and Rush had been developing with him during the half hour in the drawing-room before they had gone down to dinner. Young Stannard, during his two years on a destroyer, had conceived an extraordinary longing for Mother Earth, and had filled in his dream in tolerably complete detail. What he wanted was an out-of-door life which should not altogether deprive him of the pleasures of an urban existence; and he accomplished this paradox by premising a farm within convenient motoring distance of Chicago, on one of the hard roads. Somewhere in the dairy belt, out Elgin way, perhaps. You could have wonderful week-end house-parties in a place like that, even in winter, with skiing and skating for amusements, and in summer it would be simply gorgeous. And, of course, one could always run into town for the night if there were anything particular to come for.

Mary had volunteered to keep house for them and they had talked a lot of amusing nonsense as to what her duties should be. Graham, too, had a kid sister, only eighteen, who fitted admirably into the picture. She loved the country, simply lived in riding-breeches and rode like a man—a sight better than most men—and drove a car like a young devil. There was nothing, in fact, she couldn't do.

Graham was altogether serious about it. He had been scouting around during the fortnight since his return and had his eye on two or three places that might do. There was one four-hundred-acre property that was altogether desirable, ideal in fact, except for the one painful particular that the cost of it was just about twice as much as Graham's father was willing to run to. But if Rush would go in with him they need seek no further. The thing was as good as settled.

"I did talk to Father about it," Rush now told Mary. "The thing is a real idea. Graham and I talked seriously about it while we were smoking before we went up-stairs. The scheme is to run a dairy, hog and poultry combination on a manufacturing basis and then sell our whole product direct to two or three customers in town, one or two of the clubs—perhaps a hotel. Deliver by motor-truck every day, you see, and leave the middleman out entirely. It's the only way to beat the game. Father saw it like a shot. He said it would take a lot of money, of course, but he thought he could manage my share."

Mary relaxed just perceptibly deeper in the pillows and her eyelids drooped again. "It's getting awfully late," Rush said; "don't you want to go to sleep?" But he needed no urging to go on when she asked him to tell her all about it, and for another half hour he elaborated the plan.

Nothing but the best was to be their motto. Demonstrably that was what paid in the end. They'd have a Holstein herd to provide plenty of skimmed milk for the White Chester hogs and the White Leghorn fowls. They'd make the very highest quality butter and deliver it daily into town with, literally, twenty-four-hour eggs. There were dozens of things they could experiment with: fancy cheese, capons, little pig sausages. Perhaps, if they prospered, they could put up glass and force early vegetables ahead of the market. That was the whole idea—special stuff that could command fancy prices, and no traffic with the middleman.

He was still breezing along on the full tide of the idea, when, happening to glance at her little traveling-clock, he pulled himself up short, took away her extra pillows, switched off her night lamp and ordered her to go to sleep at once. Her apparent docility did not altogether satisfy him, and two or three times during the hour before he himself fell asleep he sat up to look under the door and see whether she had turned the light on again.

He was right about that, of course.

The enforced calm Mary had imposed upon herself as a penance for the tempest of emotion she had indulged—she had lain without moving, hardly a finger, from the time she remade that bed and crept back into it until, hearing Rush coming, she switched on the light—had had a sort of hypnotic effect upon her. So long as her body did not move, it ceased to exist altogether, and set her spirit free, like a pale-winged luna-moth from its chrysalis to adventure into the night. The light it kept fluttering back to was that blinding experience with March while the music of his song had surged through her soul and her hand had been crushed in his.

Rush's coming in had brought her back to that tired little body of hers again; his voice soothed, his presence comforted her; at his occasional touch she was able to relax. If only there were some one who loved her, who would hold her tight—tight— She hoped he would go on talking to her—on and on. Because while he talked she could manage to stop thinking—by the squirrel-like process of storing away all the ideas he was suggesting to her for consideration later.

But when the respite was over and she lay back in the dark again she made no effort to deny admission to the thoughts that came crowding so thickly. She must think, she must, before the ordeal of the next breakfast-table, have taken thought. She must have decided if not what she should do, at least what she could hope for. She was much clearer and saner for the little interlude with Rush.

Suppose in the first place—suppose that Paula's rebellion was serious. Suppose the Tower of Brass violated and the Princess carried away by the *djinn* or upon the magic carpet—whichever it was—to a world where none of them could follow her. Suppose John Wollaston bereft again. Would not Mary's old place be hers once more? Would not everything be just as it had been during those two years before her father went to Vienna?

But some instinct in her revolted utterly at that. It was an instinct that she could

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not completely reason out. But she knew that if such a calamity befell, her old place would not exist or would be intolerable if it did.

Suppose again—suppose that Paula's rebellion could be somehow frustrated. Would it be possible to save Paula for her father by saving March from Paula? In plain words, by diverting him from Paula to herself?

That was a disgustingly vulgar way of putting it. But wasn't it what she meant? And if she couldn't be honest with her own thoughts—Well then, were her powers of attraction great enough, even if they were consciously exerted to the utmost, to outpull Paula's with a musician, with a man whose songs she could sing as she had sung to-night?

That moment in old Annie's bedroom off the nursery supplied, concretely enough, the answer to her question. They had been soul to soul in there, they two. There was no language to describe the intimacy of it, except perhaps the hackneyed phrases of the wedding service which had lost all their meaning. And while they had stood together like that in the half dark, Paula had opened the door, bringing the light in with her. She had taken him confidently in her strong hands and kissed him and led him away without one hesitating backward thought.

And the truth was clear enough, incandescent, now she looked back at it, that it was Paula who had possessed him all along. That moment which she had called her own had been Paula's. Mary had got it because she had happened to come in and sit down beside him. She had, as it were, picked his pocket. She stood convicted the moment the rightful owner appeared. That was how much her chance of "saving" March from Paula amounted to.

What a hypocrite she had been to use that phrase, even in her thoughts. Save him from Paula, indeed! Paula could give him, even if she gave only the half loaf, all he needed. She could inspire his genius, float it along on the broad current of her own energy. Compared to that, what could Mary give? What would it, her one possible gift, amount to?

She pulled herself up short. Wallowing again! No more of that. She'd leave March alone, and on that resolution she'd stop thinking about him. She'd think about Rush and Graham and the farm.

Graham! They didn't come, Rush had said, any whiter than that. Probably he was right about it. It was a wonderful quality, that sort of whiteness. What was it he had done—she didn't even remember—that had caused him such bitter self-reproach? You couldn't help liking him. It ought not to be hard to fall sufficiently in love with him. And out on a farm—A farmer's wife certainly had enough to do to keep her from growing restless. With a lot of children, four to half a dozen—no one could call that a worthless life.

And it was practicable. With an even break in the luck, she could accomplish the whole of it. A man like Graham she could make happy. Her one gift would be enough for him; all he'd want. What was it he had told Rush to-night? That he had always thought her the most perfect—

At that, appallingly, she was seized in

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the cold grip of an unforeseen realization. She couldn't marry a boy like that—she couldn't marry any man who regarded her like that—without first telling him what she was; what she was not! She would have to make clear to him—there was simply no escape from that—the nature of the thing that once had happened (and had all but happened once again) in that tiny flat in New York where she had lived alone so long.

It was possible, of course, oh, more than that, probable even, that after hearing the story he would still want to marry her. That he might regard her, no matter what she said, as having been wronged, her innocence, though once taken advantage of by a scoundrel, intact. His love would be reenforced by pity. He'd think of nothing, in the stress of that moment, but the desire to protect her, to provide a fortress for her.

But would she dare, on these terms, marry him or any other man for that matter, no matter how ardently he professed forgiveness? It wouldn't be until after the marriage was an accomplished thing, its first desires satisfied, its first tension relaxed, that the story of her adventure would begin to loom black and thunderous over the horizon of his mind. Who was the man? How could it have happened? In what mood of madness could she have done such a thing? Might it ever—when might it not—happen again? No! Marriage was a difficult enough problem in these days without being handicapped additionally with a perennial misgiving like that. No thoroughfare again!

She started once more around the circle. But one can not keep at that sort of thing forever. About sunrise she fell asleep.

The next instalment of "Mary Wollaston" will appear in the March number.

So Fair the Night

By Will Thompson

SO fair the night, the moon draws near,
Like some old queen of yesteryear.
Bent, silver twigs of spruce and pine
Beneath their late snow mantle shine;
A pallor lies on field and mere.
The sparkling beams that fall appear
Of frosted radiance, crystal-clear;
They bring out every sharp outline—
So fair the night!

Old tales anew shall charm the ear;
Within, we'll seek the ruddy cheer
Of blazing logs, while berries twine
Our chimney-place, of odd design;
Enchantment lends its atmosphere—
So fair the night!

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FORTY-FIVE

(*Continued from page 56*)

tell me what it is that has kept you so absorbed all those unhealthy hours on the porch."

Even while he talked Blenham had plenty of chance to observe his companion. The most immediate effect of her presence upon him was a sort of general stimulation. For the first time since his arrival at the seaside he squared his shoulders, unconsciously strove to look his best, courted the glances of passers-by instead of avoiding or ignoring them. He considered Mrs. Turner far and away the most satisfying-looking woman on the promenade, and was proud to be seen at her side. He liked her air, her carriage, her clothes, and the way she wore them. He liked even more the quick glances from her brown eyes, for all they had a way of making him forget for an instant what he was about to say.

She let him talk business for a long time, then switched the conversation to other topics, and he found that at her implied request he let go of steel pipe without a murmur. After they returned to the hotel he became very daring, though forced to swallow three times before he could speak.

"I wonder," he said diffidently, "what you would think of my asking the head waiter to move me over to your table for dinner."

"I should consider it a positive inspiration," she replied.

LATER, his courage further fortified by a most Arcadian meal in her company, Edwin's daring mounted to greater heights.

"Shall we dance on the pier?" he asked fearfully.

"You told me," she reproved him, "that you didn't dance."

"I'm not sure that I can," he confessed. "But when I told you that, I had just overheard what your friends said about Burke. But I believe that I can dance with you, and I know that I most awfully want to try."

"Of course you can dance," she told him some time later. "By the end of the evening we shall be doing all the latest stunts!"

Blenham's state of mind at midnight was so seraphic that he could not contemplate bed. He found a solitary corner of the great porch. He did not at once light the cigar which he held, because he had given his solemn word to smoke but one, and he wanted it to last. His thoughts were slightly dizzy, but none the less glorious. For within the last hour he had proved that certain qualities of the human creature are not much different at forty-five from what they were in the "roaring twenties." He had undergone sensations which he had never expected to experience again—a species of sublimated chills and fever—alternately treading lofty pinnacles of hope and desolate vales of despair. And for more than an hour he had talked the most horrible banalities while flogging his craven tongue to the point. Then finally he had asked Athalie Turner to marry him, and been almost frightened at the new heaven and earth which her answered opened before him.

He had finally lighted his cigar, and puffed it with greater enjoyment because he knew that he was pleasing Athalie by...

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his abstemiousness. He did not think that he had ever tasted such a cigar. Neither, as far as that went, did he think that he had ever sat in so comfortable a chair or surveyed so beautiful a moonlit prospect or inhabited such a truly gorgeous universe. His happiness was of that overwhelming sort that is not satisfied with itself, but desires the happiness of every one else. Blenham believed himself now superior to all forms of earthly misery, but he did not want to feel that any one was unhappy. Had a vast throng of the wretched ones of earth suddenly appeared before the broad porch of the hotel, he believed that he could send them away cured just by talking to them.

It was at this point that his roving glance fell on a still figure motionless in a distant chair. This was a blue-coated, white-trousered, stout, and very much rumpled gentleman who had slumped down in his chair, one dangling hand holding an extinct cigar. It certainly resembled Henry Burke, and yet its attitude was not that which Burke's should have been, not that of a man who had been sharing the joys of a beach-party with care-free youth. Blenham studied the drooping figure until convinced that it really was the man from Ohio, then left his chair and crossed the porch. Burke did not so much as glance up at his approach.

"Well," Edwin said heartily, "how was the beach-party?"

"Party hell!" snapped Burke. "They ditched me!"

"Not really?"

"Fact. Don't know whether they ever intended taking me or just forgot, but when I got to the meeting-place they'd gone. As I didn't know where they were going, I couldn't follow. Blenham, we're a pair of old fools. I'm going home to-morrow, and I advise you to do the same."

Blenham's face sobered a little, but the feeling of bubbling happiness in him remained undiminished.

"I wouldn't go if I were you, Burke," he answered.

"Why not?" demanded the other. "What's the good of staying here only to have more things of this sort happen? It's what I get for trying to play around with a lot of kids!"

Blenham nodded gravely.

"I think perhaps that's right," he agreed. "As we've already said several times, we're forty-five, you and I, and these youngsters don't want us. They don't really want any of the gray-haired chaps who hang onto their skirts trying to pretend they're still young. And you can't really blame them. We'd have felt the same way at their age."

"Confound it, don't talk as though we each had a foot in the grave!" snapped Burke. "I've twenty good years in me yet."

"Why, so have I," Blenham said quickly, "but I've just discovered that the way to spend those years isn't in middle-aged caperings that won't convince any one, and will simply arouse the pity of the people who watch me."

Burke blinked at him.

"Strikes me that's a new tune," he commented.

"It is," Blenham admitted frankly. "The truth is, Burke, you and I had started on the wrong track. You were right when you said that the women were the most important element here, but for men of forty-five it shouldn't be women but woman."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that Mrs. Turner has promised to marry me."

"Well, I'm damned!" exclaimed Burke, and lighted his extinct cigar.

For a time he smoked in silence, staring across the moonlit lawn while his companion watched him narrowly. Finally Burke shifted the cigar far enough into the corner of his mouth to say thoughtfully—

"Married, eh? H'm!"

"Yes," answered Blenham, "and I can't really see why it took me so long to discover what I really needed. When I think how I might have spent the next twenty years, and how I'm really going to spend them, I shudder at the narrowness of my escape. Lord, think of me ten years hence dyeing my hair and torturing my aged legs at pier-dances, where I'd only succeed in being the terror of every pretty woman in sight. Now if I were you, Burke, I'd begin looking around—Where you going?"

For Burke had suddenly flung his cigar far out into the grass and leaped from his chair as though it had turned red-hot beneath him.

"I'm going to pack," he answered. "I'm leaving for Akron, Ohio, on the first train that will take me there."

"But—" began Blenham with the anxious haste of the proselytizer who sees his prospective convert backsliding.

"You had to come down here to get sense hammered into you," Burke interrupted, "while I've been living right next door to the immortal truth and never knew it. There's a woman in Akron I ought to have married ten years ago, and I'll do it this week if she'll have me!"

It was only three days later that Blenham received a telegram which he showed to Mrs. Turner. It was from Akron and said simply—

"She will!"

Mountain Day

By Margaret Steel Hard

GLAD blue on the mountain
And gladness in my heart,
With only a stretch of sunlit road
To hold the hills apart.

Glad blue on the mountain,
The rallying wind and I;
Smell of mould where the trail is old,
And then at last the sky!

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SHE AND HE

(*Continued from page 34*)

let them write letters like this to you!" he said. "It isn't good business. They know nothing about advertising. You must get them into control. Now, I think it would be quite worth while——"

"Mr. Soar!" Elsbeth Ann Timber pushed back her desk chair and got up to pace back and forth. She was furious. Who'd built this business? Gib Soar? No. When Gib Soar was drilling rookies she had been running campaigns for his support—the whole army's support. When he had been waiting transport back, she had been digging out clients for Elsbeth Ann Timber, Inc., "selling" herself by her own methods—and had been successful. He needn't come round now with a lot of half thought-out conclusions!

Gib Soar's job was copy in her business, and he wasn't even doing that. Twice she walked back and forth the length of the office. It was terribly irritating! But she mustn't let him see that fully. She would be dignified with him. She'd change the subject.

"Mr. Soar—that will come along all right—now as to the Shadewell copy," she said. "How is it coming? Be done soon? We are expecting a great deal——"

Gib Soar looked crestfallen. It was as though he suddenly realized that he had overstepped. He muttered something unintelligible. He stuttered a little as a man on the carpet before his boss is apt to stutter. In a moment he stepped quickly out of the office. Ann went back to her work. She thought the Shadewell copy would be coming along faster now.

Things began to break then, just as they always do in an agency. She had to go to Boston twice between Tuesday and Saturday, so that she ached for a bed that did not grumble and roar all night. She had not seen her father for days, and he was begging her to take a vacation and to run up to the Adirondacks. Vacation! She doubted if that word was in the dictionary any longer.

The boxes for the Shadewell tints were a problem that seemed totally unsolvable. The printer couldn't produce—oh, no, out of the question—such shades as had to be produced. How can you buy a package of dye for a suit of lingerie if the colors on the package aren't reliable? And the artist who was working with the lithographer on the window-trim became peeved and demanded more salary, and the printer who was turning out four-color car cards said the stuff wouldn't dry and hold that shiny finish which was so essential, and the magazines were calling up and asking for plates—no, life was hardly worth living with Gib Soar in a recalcitrant mood. Why couldn't he take hold?

IT WAS Saturday morning when the Shadewell people called up from Boston and asked her to be on hand Monday morning—to bring up more copy—it was getting late and they were worried, and they wanted the new color proofs in the four different inks for the boxes and samples of the finished car cards, and flats of the lithograph—the whole thing—to show to the directors and prove that all this money which was being spent really was to produce something concrete.

The Strength of Universal Service

"Behold the power of unity," declares the father to his sons, in Aesop's fables concerning the strength in a bundle of sticks as compared with the weakness in a single stick.

This "Power of Unity" is of absolute necessity to the strength of nations and of business. It is unity of service which is the strength and value of the Bell Telephone organization.

If all your telephone conversations were to be forever with but one person, a single line would meet all of your needs, but nation-wide service requires the cooperation of all those served as well as of all those serving.

The daily operation of the telephone for usual, local calls; its vitally important operation for the less-frequent long-distance calls; both depend upon the coordinated efforts of subscribers and telephone operators.

Moreover, in these days of high costs, an economic and universal service requires from each individual subscriber his financial and moral support.

Each community must support its telephone facilities to the best of its ability, if both it and the rest of the country are to receive the fullest benefit.

AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES

One Policy *One System* *Universal Service*

YOU, TOO, CAN HAVE BEAUTIFUL
EYEBROWS and LASHES

They add wonderfully to one's beauty, charm and attractiveness. A little

Lash-Brow-Ine

applied nightly, will nourish, stimulate and promote growth of eyebrows and lashes, making them long, thick and lustrous. Guaranteed absolutely harmless. Thousands have been delighted with the results obtained by its use; why not you? Two sizes, 50c and $1.00. At your dealers, or direct from us by mail, in plain cover, prepaid. Satisfaction assured or price refunded. *Avoid disappointments with imitations. Get the full name correct—"LASH-BROW-INE." It's imitated.* LOOK FOR *The Girl with the Rose.* It's on every box.

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Good-paying positions in the best studios in the country await men and women who prepare themselves now. For 25 years we have successfully taught

Photography, Photo-Engraving and Three-Color Work

Our graduates earn $25 to $75 a week. We assist them to secure these positions. Now is the time to fit yourself for an advanced position at better pay. Terms easy; living inexpensive. Largest and best school of its kind. Write for catalog *today.*

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"We Must Fly To-Night!"

Out of a deep sleep he woke her. She thought she knew him so well. Yet now, at two in the morning, he burst on her with this terror—this mystery—this what?

It's the beginning of one of the best mysteries ever solved by the great detective

CRAIG KENNEDY
The American Sherlock Holmes
ARTHUR B. REEVE
The American Conan Doyle

He is the detective genius of our age. He has taken science—science that stands for this age—and allied it to the mystery and romance of detective fiction. Even to the smallest detail, every bit of the plot is worked out scientifically. For nearly ten years, America has been watching his Craig Kennedy, marvelling at the strange, new, startling things that detective hero would unfold. Such plots—such suspense—with real, vivid people moving through the maelstrom of life! Frenchmen have mastered the art of terror stories. English writers have thrilled whole nations by their artful heroes. Russian ingenuity has fashioned wild tales of mystery. But all these seem old-fashioned—out of date—beside the infinite variety—the weird excitement of Arthur B. Reeve's tales.

FREE—POE
10 Volumes

To those who send the coupon promptly, we will give FREE a set of Edgar Allan Poe's works in 10 volumes.

When the police of New York failed to solve one of the most fearful murder mysteries of the time, Edgar Allan Poe—far off in Paris—found the solution. The story is in these volumes.

He was a detective by instinct—he was a story-teller by divine inspiration. Before or since—no one has ever had his power to make your hair stand on end—to send chills up your back—to hold you in terror—horror!

This is a wonderful combination. Here are two of the greatest writers of mystery and scientific detective stories. You can get the Reeve at a remarkably low price and the Poe FREE for a short time only.

HARPER & BROTHERS
Established 1817

Cut out this coupon and mail it today

Harper & Brothers, 10 Franklin Square, New York

Send me, all charges prepaid, set of Arthur B. Reeve—in 12 volumes. Also send me, absolutely free, the set of Edgar Allan Poe—in 10 volumes. If the books are not satisfactory I will return both sets within 10 days at your expense. Otherwise I will send you $1 within 5 days and $2 a month for 14 months. Send for special Canadian offer.

Name _____
Address _____
Occupation _____

Things began to hum in the office of Elsbeth Ann Timber, Inc. It is on record that there were fourteen outgoing calls by Miss Timber at one time, but somehow or other, through the maze of messages one came in which set things wrong side up as effectually as if the Bolsheviki had assumed complete control.

It was the somewhat timorous, but irascible old sales-manager of that cake of soap you have so often revolved in your hands, grouchy old Steve Bankhit of White Ripple Soap.

"There's a mistake in our color page in this month's *Ladies' Companion*," he shouted. "Come over here. Yes, come over here!"

Ann was all business, ha. ' as she dared be, yet soft as a kitten's sheathed paws. "Really, Mr. Bankhit? Something serious? I saw the page—your advertising department reported that it is pulling on the sample plan."

"Can't help it—it's wrong," he said. As though anything that pulled well could be wrong! "Wait a minute," he demanded.

SHE could hear the receiver put down, and voices in the distance as she waited for him.

"No," he said, "don't come over here until Monday. I have to go out now. But just look it over and see if you think that is just the sort of thing we should put out over our signature. Good-by!" He hung up the receiver as though he were afraid of Miss Timber's reply, and he probably was.

But now there was a pretty little stew—she had to go to Boston. Excuses don't go with your clients. You might as well imagine yourself as the presiding physician at the birth of the royal heir—detained by a completely unimportant medical affair elsewhere—as to imagine yourself in the position of Elsbeth Ann Timber. When Shadewell dyes were so close to their advent, and White Ripple in need of nursing, both on the same day, and one of them in Boston, you have to make a decision.

Ann called for Gilbert Cadwallader Soar, who so far had rather a mean reputation as a pinch-hitter. That is, she would have called for him if he hadn't called her. The omnipotent telephone jangled raucously. Ann snatched off the receiver in her nervousness, and listened. It was he.

"Where are you, Gib? Things are stirring. We've got to work all night to-night, and you've a nasty job to do for me on Monday. White Ripple——"

She heard him faintly, as though Gib Soar were a long way from her. "I've quit," he said.

"You're *what?*" she asked.

"I'm leaving the agency," she heard him say. "I'm going up to Westchester for a few days. I'm waiting for a train now."

"You can't quit, now. I don't want you to take that train. Come back to the office at once, please."

"I'm sorry, but I have to go," he said.

"Where are you going, because if you are, I'm coming after you?" Her face was drawn grimly, and if he had been there he would have seen that the corners of her mouth drooped alarmingly.

"You are not!" he said, and his voice was now plenty loud enough for her to hear.

She slammed up the receiver. Well, he had failed. Now—was there an emergency man or woman she could call in? She knew well enough that there wasn't. There were too many little details in a job such as this for any substitute from outside her own office to pick up. She had a plain copy-writer or two—but heavens, you can't trust those forty-dollar-a-week persons to feed an ailing baby! That's just what White Ripple was at that moment.

There was just one person in the whole world who could help her out—Gib Soar. He'd quit! And then it began to dawn on her what he must mean. He had been so vociferous about leaving and about her not following him—that woman, Rags! It must be that he was going to see her now! Otherwise—lazy, or indifferent, or even petulant, even Gib Soar would not have failed her in a crisis. Probably—probably he was going to propose to the girl this time—offer to throw away his life on the little pleasure-loving hoyden.

Yet what of it? Wasn't her business important? Why not go and get him? It had been hardly thirty seconds since she had hung up. He said Westchester—that would be easy—a cab would get her to Grand Central in a few minutes.

She rose like a Roman candle—seized her hat and gloves, cried to her secretary to wait for her until she got back, and departed amid snickers from her hired underlings who were amused at her haste. She dashed into an elevator which was closing its doors on her floor, squeezed in, and was at the street level in half of the time it would have taken had she missed it. A taxicab which adventitiously passed at the opportune moment was commandeered in a rustle of flying skirts. The driver would have turned around and drawn up majestically at the entrance of the Thirty-sixth Street building if he had had half a chance. But he did not. A figure darted across the street, "flopped" the running-board, and was inside before he could pull to a complete stop amid the screech of hard-applied brakes.

"Grand Central Terminal," she cried.

HE HASTENED slightly, in that way which taxicab operators in New York regard as their own special privilege. He hurried up to Thirty-ninth, started to turn into Park Avenue, decided against it, and was caught in the jam leading down to Forty-second street. He seemed to have forgotten the existence of the new ramp that runs around the station, and which forms such a valuable cut-off to those who like to hurry about their work.

Had he looked over his shoulder he would have seen a flushed, eager young face, a pretty face, for all the two wisps of hair which had escaped from beneath the hat, bent over almost to his shoulder.

"Take the bridge," she said. Like a frightened thing the cab turned into Thirty-ninth.

Ann sat up straight, one hand on the door handle, ready to leap out when the cab arrived at the little entrance on the balcony. At what level was Gib's train? Would it have gone? Probably. But the chance was worth taking. She had to have him over the week-end. Would he break his engagement—whatever it was? She'd make him. He had to break it. She had to find him. The cab slowed down. She opened the door.

"Wait," she cried, "I'll be back!" She dashed in, down the steps, flight after flight of marble steps without end, to the upper level. He wasn't there. She looked

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through a little group waiting for a gate to open. He was not in sight. She hurried on to the lower level, her heart sinking.

Strolling nonchalantly up and down in front of a gate still unopened, as though he must have another half-hour to wait, was Gilbert Cadwallader Soar, carrying a brief-case, a brown cowhide bag, and a stick which bobbed around among other persons' legs.

"Ann!"

"Don't 'Ann' me, Gilbert Soar! You come back to the office right now. I've a cab up on the ramp waiting."

"I—I—can't, you know, Ann. I have an engagement, and besides——"

"C—Come," she said briefly.

He hurried up, took her arm and looked into her face. He turned away then, and gazed off down the train concourse.

"Do you really mean that you want me to come back? Do you think I actually can be some good to you?"

She didn't look at him. It was a moment before she answered. "I think—I think perhaps you can. At any rate you're going to come back and try. Right now, no matter who—no matter where you were going."

It didn't seem that he could think of any way to answer that. He started up the stairs with Elsbeth Ann.

They reached the cab. She slipped away from him, opened the door unassisted, and clambered in. Gib Soar climbed in wearily, gave the office address, and settled back into a corner as far from Elsbeth Ann as the restrictions of space would permit.

She gathered herself slowly together. At length she spoke. "You see, Gib, I'm up against it," she said, and her eyes were bright.

"You admit it, Ann?" he asked, his face lighting up just the least.

She did not feel that this was quite the right way to talk to him. But she couldn't stop herself. She felt as though he were dependable at the moment.

"Rather," she answered ruefully. "You see old Bankhit went crazy this morning and demands that I see him Monday, and the Shadewell people want everything shown to them Monday in Boston, and here I am with no one around but clerks and a couple of cheap copy-writers whom I'd hardly dare trust with a job like this." Someway the sight of him in the car made her feel that those writers were cheap, though she didn't mean to speak of them that way. They seemed so, beside him.

"So, what are we going to do?" she asked.

"We?" he asked.

"Yes."

He looked queerly at her and began to unbuckle his brief case. "Well, we ought to be able to do a lot. I'll fix old Bankhit Monday morning. You start for Boston Sunday night."

"But I've got to take your stuff to Boston," she pleaded.

"Of course. I've been stewing and stewing about it and I think I've sort of caught the spirit. This isn't final stuff—I took it with me when I cleaned out my desk. See what you think."

He began to read from a penciled scrap of paper. "Pink! The color wrapped around the clouds at dawn. Pink! It is rose, cerise—" The cab jolted to a stop beside the building which houses Elsbeth Ann Timber, Inc.

In a moment they were in conference in Gilbert Soar's office. Slowly her confidence

"Doesn't that feel better now, Grandpa?"

Grandpa can tell her of a thousand-and one times when Sloan's Liniment routed the pains and aches of Rheumatic Twinges, Sciatica, Neuralgia, Neuralgic Headache, Lumbago, Stiff Joints, Sore Muscles.

HE always keeps it handy for those sudden, unexpected attacks. Just as thousands of families keep it handy for strains, sprains, bruises, and all other external aches and pains.

Sloan's Liniment—promptly, without skin-stain or rubbing, *penetrates*, scatters the congestion, and produces a warm tingle of comforting relief.

Get a bottle at your druggist's today. Get the *largest* bottle—greatest economy in the long run. 35c, 70c, $1.40.

Sloan's Liniment The World's KEEP IT HANDY

STENOGRAPHERS
Earn $25 to $40 a Week
Typewrite The New Way

80 TO 100 WORDS A MINUTE GUARANTEED

Totally new system. Based on Gymnastic Finger Training! Brings amazing speed, perfect accuracy—Big Salaries. Learn at home. No interference with present work. 32-page book free, explains all. Gives letters from hundreds with salaries *doubled* and *trebled*. A revelation as to speed and salary possible to typists. Don't be satisfied with $8 to $15 a week. Earn $25 to $40 by typewriting the New Way. Write to-day. Send postal.

TULLOSS SCHOOL
1472 College Hill
Springfield, Ohio

Weigh what you Should

If thin, *build up*. If burdened with excess flesh, *reduce!* Have an attractive *figure*. You CAN—as sure as sunrise. Let me explain how 92,000 refined women have done this; how *you* can do it. Simple, sure, effective. All in your own room—in a surprisingly short time.

Be Well
Why Not?

I build your vitality so that all sorts of physical ailments are relieved by Nature's methods—no drugs nor medicines. I strengthen your heart, teach you how to stand, to walk and breathe correctly. I have spent 16 years at this work—leading physicians endorse me.

My booklet, telling how to stand and walk correctly, is free. Shall I mail it to you NOW? If later you desire my services you will find the cost most reasonable. Write me.

Susanna Cocroft
624 S. Michigan Av., Dept. 20, Chicago

Miss Cocroft is nationally recognized as an authority on conditioning women as our training camps have conditioned our men.

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for Chaps and 101 daily uses

A HEALING CREAM
Mentholatum
Always made under this signature

CHAPPED hands, cracked lips and chilblains healed almost over night by its gentle, antiseptic action.

Clear a head cold by applying Mentholatum to the nostrils—outside and inside. It reduces "stuffiness" and restores normal breathing.

At all druggists' in tubes, 25c. Jars, 25c, 50c, $1.

The Mentholatum Co. Buffalo, N.Y.

"The Little Nurse for Little Ills."

SAVE 1/2

Your "Gas" and ALL Your Trouble

Evidence!—"I showed 32.3 miles on Maxwell demonstration with U. & J. Carburetor—32½ miles per gallon with Ford."

M. E. Scott, Berry, Ia.

U. & J. CARBURETOR

Doubles Mileage — Guaranteed to start car in Zero weather—No Priming. Entirely NEW principle—not a moving part—Simple. Has the Pep and Power. 50,000 delighted users. Now ready for Ford, Dodge, Maxwell and Overland.

15-DAY FREE TRIAL
Money-back Guarantee

DEALERS—Service Stations, Salesmen: The "U. & J." sells on demonstration—installed in thirty minutes — some good open territory.

U. & J. FORD TIMER will last as long as the car. Price $1.75.

U. & J. CARBURETOR CO.
Dept. 205—507 W. Jackson Blvd., CHICAGO

in him grew stronger and stronger. He had been working.

"You see, d-dear Ann, I've been in a terrible state on this stuff, and I was just slipping off up to Chappaqua to send it in with my formal resignation. I have the layouts—they're all ready. You didn't tell me that the case was so urgent. You never do tell me much about the business."

"You mean the layouts are done?" She ignored everything else.

"Yes, I have them here. They wouldn't have helped until I had the copy ready. I meant to do the right thing. I was going to finish the stuff up there in the country so that—well, to get the spirit of the stuff, you know, and where I wouldn't be interrupted by—by—well, by seeing you bob around. I was going to mail it to you."

"Do I bother you?"

"Oh no, but I'm easily bothered."

She didn't get any more than that out of him. She didn't know quite what to make of it all. The air was still strained. They came down and spent Sunday getting the stuff typed in good shape. A couple of typists helped out, and meanwhile he ran over the White Ripple matters with her, and brought everything up to date in his mind.

"That man Bankhit needs a good mental licking, he does," said Gib.

"Well, he does," she admitted, "but I don't think we can give it."

"I'll see," he said, and his mouth set just the slightest.

HE RAN out and bought her tickets and berth and saw her aboard. She had a great case filled with layouts and car cards and lithographers' proofs and the various little portfolios filled with advertising copy.

"Now," he said, "when you get up there remember that you know more about this than any of those fellows begin to think of. Hit. Hit 'em hard. Pretend you're putting over a Y. M. C. A. drive, and are bossing the whole kit and caboodle of 'em."

She looked at him amazed. "Gib! Are you really giving me advice? Honestly trying to help all you can?"

He looked at her earnestly. She thought he gritted his teeth. "Ann—I—I don't want you to be thinking nonsense. Of course I am, every bit of me. I—always want to." She caught her breath.

"If you—if you get into any difficulties up there—if you find the stuff isn't getting over big—stop your meeting." He held out his hand and snapped his fingers imperiously. "There. Just like that! And wire for me."

He lifted his hat and was gone.

Ann stumbled up the steps. She supposed he was going over to the other terminal now. Going over to take the train out to Roslyn. He made her feel so helpless. There was so much to him—he put things over when he started. What had happened to him? He had been different from the moment he had tried to resign from the office yesterday. She gave it up, and leaned her head way back and closed her eyes.

In Boston her meeting did not go well.

"What's this dofunny?" asked a querulous old director who didn't seem to think much of a woman as an advertising agent.

"The final moment" began Elsbeth Ann Timber, "the apex of the entire selling plan occurs when the housewife enters the store with the intention of making a purchase. Then is the moment when your entire campaign, advertising and selling, meets its crucial test. This is the moment at which the cash profit enters our doors——"

"Yes, yes, of course," he said fussily, "but what function does this dofunny perform? I see here it's to cost us eleven thousand dollars——"

Ann felt herself begin to wilt. She wasn't used to a man who refuses to see as a matter of business. She looked helplessly around. Johnson, the sales manager—he was fully in sympathy—dodged her look. She walked over to the corner of the big table in the conference room. Boylston Street stretched below her. She wished—she wished—well, she wished Gib Soar were there just then. Lunch hour intervened instead.

They were nice enough, but the air was loaded. She wondered if some bickering agent had been canvassing them, trying to convince them that their advertising might be in better hands. She had every confidence in all the work they had done. As she walked into the office for the afternoon session she was handed a telegram.

She tore it open. It must be from her office. What was wrong now? Had Bankhit downed Gib—had White Ripple gone the way——?

"Settled Bankhit in ten minutes. Coming to Boston. Be in office by three-thirty. Soar," the telegram read.

Gib coming! Could he help? Could he pull her chestnuts out of the fire? Well, she'd hold them off then, till three-thirty. It had to be done. They were slipping away from her. Well, she'd hold them.

She did. She made them impatient. They looked at their watches. They assented to her entire rehash of the copy they had already approved.

They kept referring her back to the subject of the "dofunny." It was just a lithograph window-trim. There was not much to it—one way or the other. But she had to hold them.

Gilbert Cadwallader Soar came softly into the room and apologized for intruding. Leisurely he unpacked his case. He slipped over to Ann, and heard in her legitimate whisper the sense of the situation. From the bag he took out a large cedar box filled with long clear Havanas, passed them around the roomful of men, took up the window-trim, looked at it, pinned it to the wall, stepped off, eyed it, unpinned it, changed its postion, pinned it up again, and turned to the querulous director.

"Boston had the White Sox 6 to 1 in the sixth," he said, smiling. And then he began to speak, speak as he must have done to hundreds of rookies who had passed through his hands, speaking in that way which permits no disapproval, which admits of no indifference, which shows men what they must do. He didn't talk about the window-trim. He acted as though they could know nothing about that. He told them that the advertising agent is to the client as the doctor is to his patient.

Such talk was their need. It did not matter what Gilbert Soar had to say to them, as long as he used his major's voice.

Ann had the stuff—and what can a bevy of goat-led directors know about merchandizing? So then, before he had said the half of what Ann thought he was going to say, Gib turned them over to her.

She could feel that the cantankerousness had gone magically out of them, and with that she felt new confidence. Gib had

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Aspirin

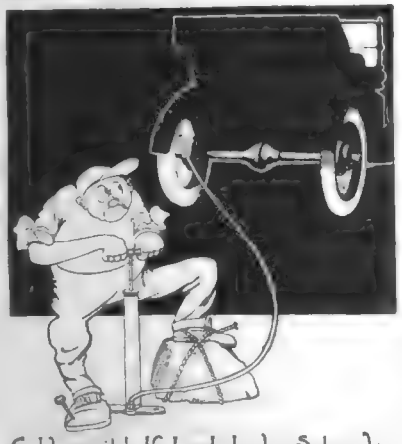
Name "Bayer" identifies genuine Aspirin introduced in 1900.

BAYER

Insist on an unbroken package of genuine "Bayer Tablets of Aspirin" marked with the "Bayer Cross."

The "Bayer Cross" means you are getting genuine Aspirin, prescribed by physicians for over nineteen years.

Handy tin boxes of 12 tablets cost but a few cents. Also larger "Bayer" packages. Aspirin is the trade-mark of Bayer Manufacture of Monoaceticacidester of Salicylicacid.



Goldarn it! If I only had a Schrader Pump Connection on the end of that hose I wouldn't have to do this twice or maybe three times

Price 50 Cents

A. SCHRADER'S SON, BROOKLYN, N.Y.

I TEACH Penmanship BY MAIL

I won World's First Prize for best course in Penmanship. Under my guidance you can become an expert penman. Am placing many of my students as instructors in commercial colleges at high salaries. If you wish to become a better penman, write me. I will send you FREE one of my Favorite Pens and a copy of the Ransomerian Journal. Write today.

C. W. Ransom, 503 Essex Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

673 CASH PRIZES

for the best letters telling why Partola—"The Doctor in Candy Form"—famous laxative and internal antiseptic, should be in every American home and used by everyone in the family. Contest closes Feb. 15, 1920. Prizes as high as $150.00—there is plenty of chance for all—you need not be an advertising writer to compete. FREE sample of Partola and full information sent upon request.

PARTOLA CO., 28 West 17th St., New York, N. Y.

paved the way. She rode it prettily, so that when she was through they behaved as though they wished to applaud. Obediently they filed out—having felt strange, perhaps a little out of place, in their own directors' room. The sales-manager went too, escorting them deferentially. They had had their due.

Self-consciously Ann began picking up papers and portfolios to stuff into their containers. The triumphant Ann was gone. She was wondering now if she could handle—well, things like this might happen again. She couldn't forever call on Gib Soar, or let him see that she wanted his help—he'd go along home and tell Rags, and the redhead would laugh and poke fun. Why couldn't she be impersonal? She wasn't being businesslike at all in her thoughts.

A sheet of schedules blew to the floor. She stopped quickly to rescue them. She heard the little crack and saw the myriad lights and felt the pain of a vicious bump. It dazed her more than a mere bump should. She could just discern that he was rubbing his head too. Slowly his face changed as he saw evidence of what must be more than pain.

She felt herself rise, and now she was sitting on the directors' table. She felt his arm about her shoulders and her head became heavy, until it dropped softly on his shoulder and she heard his whisper in her ear.

"It was fun to-day, wasn't it, dear? Those old dollar-mongers ate out of our hands, didn't they? We're not such a bad team. I've been eating my heart out to take some of your load to myself, dear. But you wouldn't let me!"

"Wouldn't let you?" she sobbed. "You wouldn't take a bit of it, not once, till to-day."

He held her face in his hands as he spoke. "Oh, and you wanted to fire me a while back, didn't you?"

She nodded.

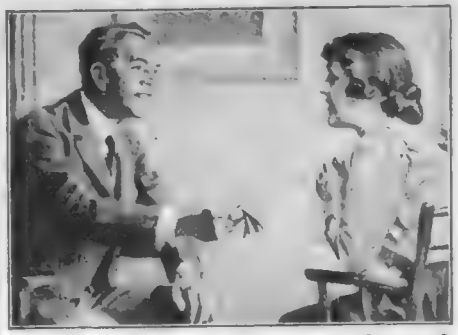
"You old dear! You unapproachable old bear! But I know you now, Elsbeth Ann. I'm going to install you in an office in Bayside, Long Island, with a Colonial walnut corner cupboard, some nice old windsor chairs, and a highboy or two and such stuff. You can come to town about three times a week, if you want. I'm going to buy you out! Will you sell?" He stared full into her eyes.

So that is how it came to be Timber & Soar, Inc., Advertising Counsel.

The Journey

By Mary Stewart Cutting

THIS morning I go into the Land
Where what is unreal is real,
Where that which can not be seen is visible,
And that which is afar knocks at the heart,
Where that is heard for which there are no words:
It calls into being from the impassable rock
The white-flashing, life-giving waters of courage!



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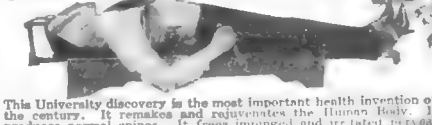

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IN CAMERA

(*Continued from page 28*)

they had come upon traces of recent fires, and once a half of a dead hippo, swollen and horribly odorous, had drifted past them, showing marks of knives on its greening flesh.

Then came a night when, winning to an island, they found traces of a fresher fire—one kindled within a few days, at least—the growth hacked and trampled about it. But it was already past dark, and too weary to investigate, they sank to sleep. There were no luxuries of tents and tables now; such things as that had been left behind with most of the stores, to await their return to Kayancor. With the first gray of morning Ward was awakened by a shake, and saw Kenney standing over him.

"Ward—wake up—I want to talk to you."

Flat gray of sky through the spectral trees, the familiar gum of dew soaking everything. A veil of steam over the surface of the swamp, the grunt of a water-hog rooting somewhere among the cane. And Kenney, quivering like a scenting setter, even his beard seeming to point to an object held in his hand.

"Look—I just found this."

THROUGH eyes haggard with restless sleep, Ward saw a tomato-can, almost ludicrously ordinary with its hacked and bent lid, the scarlet of its label still bright. Against that background of the smoldering fire and Kenney's stained and ragged figure, it gave suggestions of Sunday supplements and their colored and determined comedy of hobo cartoons. But it became tragedy as Kenney went on:

"We had no tomatoes last night. We used the last can of them thirteen days ago—I wrote it down in my diary."

Pallid and unshaven, aching with morning fever, Ward rose, still scarcely grasping the import of it all.

"Well?"

"Can't you understand?" Kenney blazed in the swift irritation that was upon them all. "Twenty-one days in the Südd—and here we are, back again in the same place we were on the eighth. Those fires—that dead hippo three days ago—it was the one you shot for the niggers to get meat. We are just going round in a circle, I say."

"You mean we are lost?"

"I mean we have never been found since we came into this beastly swamp. Twenty-one days, and we have only short rations for five more. We must strike back to Kayancor at once."

Ward sat down again, holding his throbbing head, wondering what it was he so wanted to say. Then it came, with a bald finality:

"But that means that we abandon the expedition."

"I'm not going to starve in this damn swamp," snarled Kenney; "nor Strobridge either. We have been talking it over together."

Ward gazed around at the sleeping camp. The canoemen piled in snoring heaps by the boats, the white men stretched about the dead fire. Sears, just a mop of hair and a blanket; Strobridge, full length beside him, looking something like

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a fallen tower. Alphin, lying alone and apart, his face gray and wasted, the mouth in the unconscious betrayal of slumber fallen into lines of a startling arrogance. It made Ward feel almost a conspirator to be standing there amid these unconscious men, exchanging sibilant whispers with Kenney across that betraying tomato-can.

"But the Chief?" he breathed. "He will never consent to turn back."

"We'll have some trouble with him, of course," Kenney agreed. "But Strobridge and I will stick together, and if you come in on our side there will be nothing for Alphin to do but give in."

"Oh—I must think," Ward groaned.

All through the drearily familiar morning tasks he thought, while around them the Südd drowsed into the stifle and glitter of the day. At the hasty breakfast he was still thinking, but no nearer a decision than before. To fail Alphin now, at almost the last; to deal him the blow of defection; but then again, to go on deeper and deeper into these hideous mazes, with failing supplies and sickening men. Kenney was just a fever-shaken skeleton, while Strobridge's condition was already serious. Even Alphin was being sustained only by his colossal will.

Of them all it was Sears who had come through the best; but then he had no responsibilities except that camera of his, and all the hopes, enthusiasms and doubts for the success of the expedition, which perpetually fretted the others, left him untouched. It was with envy that Ward heard him whistling as he prepared his machine for the day's work, moving about with that air of being completely out of it all.

Alphin suspected something even though they had not spoken as yet. As he rose, his "Now then, Ward; get the boats ready," came with some defiance in it, and at Kenney's nervous, slightly cracking "One moment, Chief—we have something to say first," he lowered his head at them like a bull sniffing battle.

THE hour that followed was horrible to Ward. Even with all allowances for broken nerves and the wracking wretchedness of the last weeks, he felt that the situation deserved to be treated with some dignity, especially with those squatting, lounging canoe-men looking on in habitual nigger insolence. But there were times when it became mere quarrel and flinging about of arms, and always there was that ghastly tomato-can as the chief exhibit, and not all its import could save it from a suggestion of garbage and squalor.

It was strange how little mention of Zakembwe there was in that discussion. Looking back on the last weeks, Ward could see how little it had been in their minds at all since entering this trap of the Südd; all thought of it seemed to have been pushed out by the hourly necessity of just keeping on. The nearer they came to Zakembwe the less it seemed to be there, as though it were just a mirage that dissolved on approach.

At last came the moment which he most dreaded, as Alphin, white with fury, turned to him:

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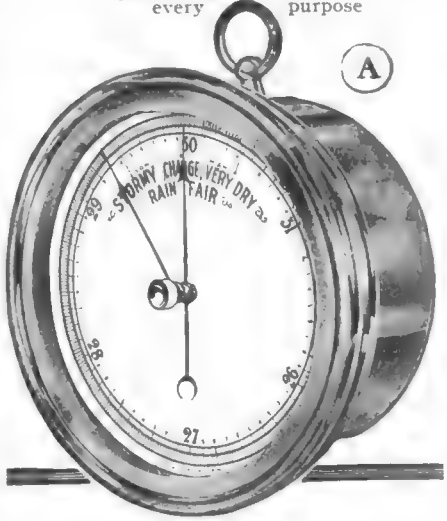

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If only he would not take that tone of blasting sarcasm; it was so useless. Glancing at Sears, busily testing his camera crank, Ward wished that they could change skins for that instant. But Alphin was waiting, and he dragged his voice up from his throat, the words bitter as acid on his tongue:

"I am sorry, sir, but I see no other way. You must remember that when we decided on the route through the Südd it was understood that Atta Baidoo would be the guide——"

"So *you* are against me, too."

Alphin's roar was in Ward's ears; seemingly it was on Ward's mouth as well, for not even that crashing impact could convince him that that had really been a blow from Alphin's fist. It was perhaps the bravest, as certainly it was the most dignified, moment Ward had yet achieved, as he stood there making no effort to return it.

Shafts of sunlight, like brilliant knives through the matted masses of vegetation; a glimpse of water, limitless cane-brake, and those nodding papyri. Sears, with narrowed gaze, quietly turning his crank; the naked negroes squatted near by, looking on with round-eyed animal curiosity. Alphin, whitening as he realized the brink over which his anger had driven him; Ward himself, wiping the blood from his mouth—and always, in the very center of things, that horrible tomato-can.

A BLOW It meant the end, they all knew that; and they could feel things smashing around them, leaving them standing in the very ruins of the expedition, ruins none the less actual for being invisible. Alphin knew it too, and he stood there a figure of tragedy, but still unable to unbend and speak the words for which Ward was giving him opportunity. There was still so much that might be saved, but Alphin's intolerable egoism drove him, even while he saw that to which it was carrying him.

"I can assure you, gentlemen, that my forthcoming book will contain a full—a very full—account of this affair."

His book. A laugh burst harshly from Ward's cracked lips. Alphin's book—Irabamba over again. What was it he was remembering? A courtyard, all-pink walls and orange creepers, and Sears's voice—"He sure seems to have it in for the guys who went with him."

The thought of that book was to be much with them in the months that followed. As Kenney kept repeating, in tones of pitched injury:

"He has us all tied up by our contract not to publish *anything* until three months after his own book is out. Three months' start with the public for his own story—nice reputations we'll have."

They were still in the Südd when he first said that, watching the dark cone of night blot out the sky while a thin mist veiled the cane-brakes. Earth, water, sky and a desolation of vegetation, all unpierced by any human light. The very core of the last stronghold of savagery, but into it civilization reached impalpable fingers and beat on their brains with the tattoo of an unwritten book. To Ward came recollections of things he had heard concerning the men who had returned with Alphin from that Andean plateau. How the bitter blight of "On the Trail of the Incas" had broken off the marriage of one of them, and forced another to take his broken career to Australia.

As for himself, he knew that now Alphin was not the sort to have any mercy on a man whom he had struck.

WARD never cared to look back on that return to Loanda Pequeña; that they got through at all was proof of what flesh can endure. Even the barest necessities had to be left behind at Kayancor, for it took more than half the handful of negroes to transport the cases of precious film that were to pay the expenses of the expedition.

In curious reversal, it was now Sears who seemed the center of the group, by simple reason of not being identified with either of its factions. Kenney, Strobridge, even Alphin, sought his ears in that strange human need for another's sanction, and it was only Ward who held aloof. As week followed week of grinding effort, each day a victory in itself that must be repeated on the morrow, Ward became aware of a sort of subjective patching-up going on around him. He could not help seeing that, under the surface, Alphin and the two others were gradually drawing together and leaving him on the outside.

That patching-up grew more evident as, with the approach to the limits of the bush, that civilization to which they were returning pressed its problems more strongly upon them. It was Sears who first spoke of it, as they halted for camp by a stream whose thin clear thread told of the coming hills.

Tired with a day in which he had borne more than his share, Ward flung himself down by his pack, too exhausted to take his usual part in the preparations for the night. Once he was aware that Kenney had drawn near and spoken to him, but he seemed to have no voice in which to answer. A little later, from the camp, the doctor's words reached his ears—"he wouldn't take any notice, so I left him."

"Shirking now, is he?"

That was Strobridge, and close upon it came Sears's tones, in flat and reasonable agreement:

"Sure, he's a shirker all right—he don't ever carry any more than double his share."

Later on he came to where Ward was lying, a tin cup of steaming tea in his hand.

"Here, drink this," he said. "You needn't thank me, if you don't want to; it's just business. We'll be needing those shoulders of yours again to-morrow."

His actions belied his words as he raised the other up. Vaguely touched, Ward drank, and for a while they sat in silence watching the star-sheen on that lonely unnamed African stream.

"How much do you know of what's going on back there?" Sears said at last.

Meeting his glance across the descending dusk, there was a moment in which Ward felt an impulse to talk, a boyish half-frightened realization of his aloneness. The other's look of self-contained understanding so corroborated the suspicions against which he had been fighting for weeks, thrusting them from his mind as base things. Kenney and Strobridge

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were both too well established to be publicly pilloried, but the safety of their positions, as well as Alphin's own driving demon of egoism, demanded a hook on which to hang the failure of the expedition.

"Men sure are queer beasts," Sears agreed, answering Ward's stare as though it had been a spoken word. "Somebody's got to be the goat every time."

It seemed almost an offer that he was making as he sat silently on, for once allowing his human magnetism to creep out through his atmosphere of habitual detachment. It was a temptation to accept it, but Ward, through years of grueling track-training, had the habit of wrestling with temptations, and a cold young pride came up in him.

"I can hardly listen to gossip about the gentlemen who are my colleagues."

"Gossip—mother o' Mike!" ejaculated Sears as he lifted himself from the ground. "I get you; you have handed me mine and I kind of guessed you would. If I brought you some grub, would my hands poison it?"

Entirely undisturbed, he went, leaving Ward to wonder many things. Why he had so repelled Sears, for instance, and what had been the meaning of that hint of admiration in the other's words? Why everything—and why anything at all? That was, perhaps, the blackest night of all for him. He felt as though he were being squeezed between the wilderness he was leaving and the civilization he was approaching. Somehow the bush seemed less vindictive of the two, for its enmities were at least frank and open.

IT WAS the last camp before Loanda. Though it could not restore their rags, the arid air of the littoral had brought back a measure of health to their bodies as they sat about its night fires in their usual separation. Alphin still grimly alone; Kenney and Strobridge together near him; Ward and Sears each a little apart. It was the latter who broke the silence, nodding round the circle with his narrow-lidded gaze.

"Well, even if we didn't find Zakembwe, we sure got some great pictures. Bully stuff, all of it, and some better; and one of the best bits of all——"

He paused, with a certain deliberate intent which brought the attention of them all upon him. As he half reclined there, viewing them all with a sort of impudent deliberation, there came an atmosphere of things about to be precipitated; a sense as though he were reaching back into all that never came to actual sight.

"And one of the best bits of all, Mr. Alphin, will be the one of your little fracas there on that island. It will sure make a sensation when it gets on the screen."

In the silence that followed, the scene etched itself on Ward's brain so that ever after he could recall its smallest detail. A reek of wood smoke, the smell of brown earth under a sickle of new moon. The shapes of twisted euphorbias against the stars, the throaty chatter of the negroes round their own fire.

That blow from Alphin, the unprovoked, undefended outburst of an ungovernable violence, to be flashed nightly from the screens into a million eyes all over the country. Then came Alphin's voice, choked with astonishment:

"You photographed that?"

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"Why, sure," Sears answered. "It was all in the story, wasn't it?"

"That film must be destroyed."

"There'll be some difficulty about that," came Sears's reply, with a deepening of that impudent deliberation. "The film cases have got all mixed up somehow and nobody but myself knows just where that particular bit is. To be sure of destroying that you'd have to destroy every foot I've shot—and I'd hate to think what the Cosmic News Syndicate would do to you if you did that."

"I don't know but what it could be arranged, though," he nodded, as a kind of negligible afterthought, and Alphin's retort came swift as a whip-lash, and as stinging:

"You mean you want money?"

"It might seem so to you," Sears answered. "But this time my price is different. I'll agree to keep that bit of film back for a while—say until your book is published. I'm kind of curious to see what you say in it of these guys here—especially Ward."

With that he rose and sauntered off into the landscape, nor was he seen again that night.

IN THE first days back in Loanda it was the luxury of a real bed once more that most enchained Ward. He was still lying in it late one morning, when Sears entered his room. It must have been a fresh outfit that the visitor was wearing, but it was so much like his former one that in the shadow of the slatted shutters it might have been the same, even to the cigaret drooping from the corner of his mouth.

"I'm off on the steamer this evening," he announced. "The 'Sahara' people have sent me my ticket and I go straight through to little old Los Angeles. But I developed that bit of film we were talking of, and I thought I'd bring you a copy as a souvenir."

In surprise Ward took it, some thirty feet of snaky celluloid ribbon; in increasing astonishment he looked down at it.

"But—man—it's all blank!" he exclaimed.

"Sure," Sears agreed.

He seated himself on the foot of the bed, cross-legged like a slightly world-worn young Buddha, with a couple of grinning imps dancing in his eyes.

"Sure," he repeated. "I wasn't ready to shoot just then, but Alphin don't know that, you see."

In increasing perplexity Ward turned the film in his hand, looking at it as though its blank length might offer some solution.

"What I can't make out is—why did you do it?" he asked. "Especially when I—we——"

"When we neither of us had any use for the other?" Sears finished for him. "Well—it is something like this. I hadn't been with your outfit two weeks before I saw that you were the hero of that story."

"I!" Ward ejaculated.

"Yes, you; and I saw it more and more as time went on," the other continued. "Especially on that march back from Kayancor. When things were going well with you, we two weren't doing any holding hands down by the dear old Arukai. And when things were going bad with you, you didn't come around, like those other three, trying to get me as witness on your side. Not much—no—you just kept right on treating me with your darned politeness, just as if I wasn't there. And say—what kind of a film would it make if I let the hero get balled out at the last by the heavy?"

A light seemed to crack in the back of Ward's brain, and against it, in a whizzing flash, the past four months sped by again. A revealing instant, one in which he saw a vast deal more than he could assort and understand, but it brought an exclamation to his lips.

"But see here—it looks to me as if you were a deal more the hero than ever I was."

Sears rose at that, with a surprised impatience that the other could not see when it was all so plain.

"How could I be the hero in a story that I was photographing—tell me that?"

He was going toward the door now, pausing for a last steady stare.

"Can't you see that I was never in it at all? Well—so long, and be good to yourself."

He was going, leaving Ward to grapple with this view-point of all life—even the tremendously serious Alphin Expedition—as merely a moving-picture story. It so took the dignity of substance out of things, but then it so took away the burden as well; and, as Sears himself had confessed, there was so much of life that was invisible.

He was almost at the door now, whistling "The Rosary" through the cigaretless corner of his mouth. Another moment and he would be gone, walking completely out of it all; with a laughing shout Ward sprang after him, catching his shoulders, twisting him round face to face

"Hey—stop—you damned ass, come back here!"

Wilderness Song

By Grace Hazard Conkling

I FOUND myself alone . . . and then
No man differed from other men,
And they were like a mood gone by.
The planets quivered on the sky

And poured them out in silver streams.
The wilderness was blurred with dreams
And starlight and the ghost of blue.
Trees, with their great wings folded through
The mist, were stirring where it thinned.
The young moon floated up the wind,
And from the warm and hidden ground
I heard the multitudinous sound

Of life I felt and used to know
A thousand thousand years ago
And mean to know again some day
A thousand thousand years away.

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The BIT of LUCK

(Continued from page 69)

upon young Bill. I saw his face go white and red, but he stood steady and rested on his spade, one foot in the ditch and one on the roadside. Tabor stepped out and came round my side against where Bill stood. Opened the bonnet and put his head in and tinkered a bit. Then he said low and clear: 'To-morrow, Bill. Jump in the minute I shout,' got back alongside me, and we pulled out and got away.

"Next day we fixed her ready. A big fur rug we lashed across to cover the back seat so that a man sitting there would only show his head above it. On the seat were roomy trousers, shooting jacket and a big leather coat that young Bill could wriggle into over his broad-arrow suit. Tabor got in behind this time. Plan of it was for him to step out alongside young Bill and leave the door open and the side of the rug turned up, so young Bill'd make just one dive and be in the seat. Tabor was to walk round the front of the car, come to the seat alongside me as if for a spanner or such, get his hand on the door, and then shout 'Now!' and the two of 'em would jump for it.

"By darn, I felt like I'd got a cold fish down between my shirt and my spine as we lit down that road to lift our passenger. Tabor was breathing through his nose so I could hear him above the engine. It was sure jumpy work until we got something to jump for, which was when we re-started, and the shouting and shooting began."

I said "Shooting! By gad, the warders fired at you, did they?"

"They sure did. Three of 'em were standing with their carbines on that bit of an embankment right above young Bill's head and where we pulled up. Tabor slips out from behind according to program, leaves the door on the swing and comes steady round the front of the car, young Bill standing resting on his spade pretty much as he'd been the day before.

"Then something switched in we hadn't figured on. A warder above young Bill bends over and sings out 'Two-forty! Get on with your work there! Standing staring!'

"The shout staggered Tabor a bit. Nonplussed him. That's the word you'd use, eh? He stops and has a squint inside the bonnet to collect himself and to watch out of the back of his eye what young Bill would do. Young Bill took a wrong turn. Stead of making a show of getting on with his digging he remained as he was, resting on his spade, ready to jump at the shout. Tabor fetches round from the bonnet and comes to the door. Puts his fist on the handle and his foot on the step and opens his mouth to shout.

"Things got tight then. The darn warder that had sung out to young Bill sings out again, 'Damn you, two-forty,' he sings out, 'get on with it!' and as if their tongues had been pulled with the same string, Tabor chooses the very same moment to let fly. 'Now!' he shouts, an' out of every second in the whole blamed year couldn't have chosen a worse one. The warder with his 'Get on with it!' jumps down into the trench by young Bill and just about hit the earth with Tabor's 'Now!'

"Bill slugged him with the spade. Drove the handle into the pit of his stomach good and hard and jumped for the car and I and I slipped home the clutch, and by darn, the twenty seconds that auto took to pick up her stride taught me more about eternity than a churchful of bishops could explain in ten years. It sure did."

He paused as if to reflect again upon those age-long moments while the car crawled into her speed, then went on again:

"Shouts—hell's own shouting—and shots. I took a squint round as she began to rip. Young Bill sitting bolt upright, dead pale, darn grim, his chin just above the hitched-up rug. The two warders on the embankment down on one knee letting fly and the one with the stomach-ache stooping for his gun.

"'They're shooting to hit the tires,' says Tabor.

"'They're darn near hitting me,' I says, "and one comes *pee-whit* between our darn heads and slick through the wind-screen in front of us. By darn, we lit out after that bullet till I reckon we came mighty near catching it. Trust me for that. I sure shook up that car. We were round a bend and greasing up the miles, and I think I'd never have stopped from then to now if Tabor hadn't hollered to me about getting the disguise covers down over the paintwork. So I stopped her and he nipped down and pulled the canvases over her.

"He's practised that till he could do it in sixteen seconds, and I reckon he did it in nearer six. Never stopped even for a word with young Bill. I took a look at young Bill while we waited. Just got his chin above the rug just like I'd first seen him. I reckon he was frozen stiff with the strain and the reaction. Dead pale still. Eyes half shut. Little blue bruise middle of his forehead where I reckoned he'd hit his head jumping in. I gave him a grin, and Tabor sings out to him, 'Get those clothes on, Bill. Over your things. On the seat beside you,' and drops in next me and I ripped her off again.

"We'd got the route figured out plumb. Another four miles and we swung left to double back, and let out all we knew. At the turn Tabor put his hand on my arm. 'I'll go behind now to Bill,' he said. 'We're safe. By God, we've done it.'"

And my narrator struck a match and put it to his pipe. "We were," he said "By darn, we had."

I got out my own pipe. "Yes, by Jove, that's a story," I said. "A swift business, my word, it was. I say, there's one thing, though. Where exactly did the bit of luck come in? You started out to show how a bit of luck always just turns the scale in these things, one side."

"*Or* the other. Sure. The bit of luck comes into the story right here. It came into the prison-snatching lay right at the very moment we got young Bill aboard and pulled away."

"Ah. How?"

He inhaled a long breath from his pipe and blew it away to the full of his lungs.

"When Tabor went round at the turn to join young Bill behind, he found him what he'd been from the start—stone dead."

I gave an exclamation.

"Yep. That little blue bruise on his forehead was where the bullet lit out. . . . You've got to count on luck. You sure have."

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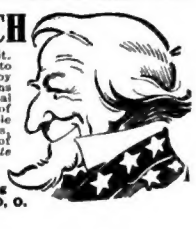

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